

SIVA AND SAKTI.

AN ELABORATE DISCOURSE ON HINDU
RELIGION AND MYTHOLOGY,—THEIR
ORIGIN AND INTERPRETATION.

(In Two Volumes)

VOL II.

BY
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ETC. ETC.

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Siva and Sakti

VOL. II.

The Religion of Sakti

PART I.

CHAPTER I.

The Great Mother.

The religion of Sakti * exerts more influence than any other religion in India. It is the religion of the BEAUTIFUL GREAT MOTHER OF THE UNIVERSE. To call the GREAT SPIRIT as MOTHER is sweeter, more loving,—more endearing,—more soul-stirring than

With this volume, we enter into the most difficult portion of our task. Saktism is not only very deep, very solemn, very mysterious,—but for various causes, it has become the centre of many horrible and abominable rites and ceremonies,—at least in the worldly sense. We shall purposely leave out all that is objectionable :—this work is intended neither to defend, nor to censure and abuse them. Our object is to place before our readers what constitutes *true* and *real* Worship of Sakti, our great loving dear Mother on High.

anything else. Who is more loving, more endearing,—who is dearer on earth than mother? Why should we not then call our LIFE and SOUL,—our BEGINNING and END,—as our DEAR GREAT MOTHER! And who is SHE? A great devotee thus addresses HER :—

“I have no father,—no mother ;—I have no friend, no giver,—I have no son, no daughter ; I have no servant, no master ; I have no wife,—I have no learning, no wealth,—thou art my sole Refuge, O mother Vayani ! †

I have fallen into great distress ; I am overwhelmed by and am mad in desire and temptation. I am bound in the strong rope of evil ways,—thou art my sole and only Refuge, O Vayani !

I do not know how to make gifts and give away alms. I do not know what is Dhyana and Yoga. ‡ I do not know the *Tantras*, § nor do I know *Stotras*

* We have quoted a few beautiful *Adorations* to Sakti in the first volume of this humble work. They must have given some idea of what we mean and whom we worship in the name of Sakti and in her thousand other names. These beautiful *Adorations* breathe in the *Great Mother*, and express love equal to which is difficult to be found anywhere.

† *Vayani* means Mother of the Universe,—the Queen of the Universe.

‡ *Dhavana* is deep meditation. We have already given some idea of *Dhyana* and *Yoga*.

§ The works that inculcate the worship of Sakti are known by the name of *Tantras*. We shall have to speak much about them later on.

and *Mantras*. * I do not know *Puja*, † nor do I know *Nyasa-Yoga*. ‡ Thou art my sole and only Refuge, O Vavani !

I do not know what is virtue,—I do not know which are the holy places ; I do not know what is *Mukti*, nor do I know what is *Vakti*, §—Mother, thou art my sole and only Refuge, O Vavani !

I am always an evil-doer,—I always keep evil company,—my understanding is bad ; I am a bad servant ; I do not perform my family rites ; I am always engaged in evil deeds, I use evil words,—my seeing is also evil,—Thou art my sole and only Refuge, O Vavani !

The Lord of beings, the Lord of pleasures, the great God,—the Lord of Celestials, the Lord of the day, the Lord of the night,—no, I do not know any other Gods. I always pray shelter from Thee. Thou art my sole and only Refuge, O Vavani !

Mantras are certain mysterious words, uttered in Sakti-worship. They are supposed to have immense power. We shall have to speak much about them in the following pages.

* *Puja* is worship—some idea of the *Puja* has also been given in the first volume.

† *Nyasa-Yoga*—is *Pranayama*. Please see Vol. I.

‡ *Mukti* is Emancipation,—final Salvation. We have described *Mukti* as understood and desired by the Hindus. It is complete destruction of further rebirths and attainment to God-head,—final and complete *Unity* and *Identity* with Brahman.

§ *Vakti* is devotional love,—deep—very deep—love for and complete surrender of oneself to God. Please see our chapter on *Vakti-Yoga* and *Vakti-Marga* in the Vol. I. This beautiful Adoration tells us what *Vakti* is. We need not further explain it.

In quarrels, in bereavements, in difficulties, on solid lands, in liquid water, in fire, on the mountains and amongst the enemies, or in the deepest forest, when I pray for thy protection, dost thou save me. Thou art my sole and only Refuge, O Vavani !

I am Protectorless, I am poor, I am old and attacked with diseases. I am weak, I am unfortunate, I am in great difficulties ;—I am always in confused understanding. Thou art my sole and only Refuge, O Vavani !”

This is the MOTHER who is the REAL MOTHER, and not a PHILOSOPHICAL IDEA only. The devotees saw her and still see her ; and to all, SHE is no other than THE Mother.—the loving MOTHER, the dear MOTHER of the living Universe. Therefore Saktism is a religion of *Vakti*, of great *Vakti* alone. It is the religion of the highest DEVOTIONAL LOVE AND FAITH,—and hundreds of men and women appeared in India who SAW, who FELT, who PLAYED with this Great Mother. And She has been brought by the devotees down to the earth and worshipped and adored in thousands of temples and in hundreds of images. *

One devotee thus exclaims :—“Thou art *Brahmani* in the *Brahmoloka*,—thou art *Sarvamangala* in *Vai-*

* We hope we have sufficiently shown that these worships are by no means idolatry. Perhaps it is hard to realise all this for ordinary men unless and until they have acquired deep devotional love,

kuntz * Thou art *Indrani* in *Amaravati*, † *Ambika* in the abode of *Varuna*. ‡ Thou art *Kala* in the kingdom of *Yama*, || Thou art *Suva* in the palace of *Kuvera*." §

"Thou art *Mahananda* in the south-east point, and *Mrigavahini* in the north-east point. Thou art *Raktadanta* in the south-west point and *Suladhharini* in the north-east point." ¶

"Thou art *Vaisnavi* in the Pathala. ** Thou art *Devamohini* in *Sinhala*. †† Thou art *Surusha* in *Mani-dwipa* ‡‡ and *Vadrakali* in *Lanka*. |||

* *Brahmaloka* is the supposed abode of *Brahma*,—the *Saguna Iswara*. *Brahmani* is his wife,—i.e. his FORCE.

Vaikunta is the abode of *Vishnu* which is but one of the heavens out of many of the *Saguna Iswara*.

Sarva Mangala means *all beneficial*.

† *Indrani* is the wife of the Lord of the Celestials,—*Indra*. *Amaravati* is the chief city of the heaven of the Celestials.

‡ *Varuna* is the God of waters in the Puranas.

|| *Yama* is the Lord of the Kingdom of Death. *Kala* is death.

§ *Kuvera* is the Lord and God of wealth. *Suva* means beneficial.

¶ Four points are the four different points of the sky. It means she is everywhere.

** *Pathala* is the nether-world.

†† *Sinhala* is Ceylon.

‡‡ It is difficult to say which is *Mani Dwipa*. *Dwipa* is an Island. It evidently refers to some Island, known to the ancient Aryans. Can it be the Island of Java?

||| *Lanka* was the Capital City of Ceylon when the great king *Ravana* was its king. We need not say, this story is told in the best Indian Epic, the celebrated and the world-renowned *Ramayana*.

"Thou art *Rameshari* in Setubanda. * Thou art *Vimala* in Purushathama, † Thou art *Viraja* in Udradesa, ‡ Thou art *Kamaksha* in Nilparvata." ||

"Thou art *Kalika* in Bangadesa, § *Maheshwari* in Ajodhya. ¶ Thou art *Vadrakali* in Kurushkhetra. ** Thou art *Katyani* in Vraja, †† Thou art *Mahamaya* in Darika ‡‡ Thou art *Maheshwari* in Mathura." |||

"Thou art *appetite* of all beings, thou art the *Shore* of all Seas. Thou art the ninth day of the black

* Setubanda is modern Rameswaram,—the place from which Adam's bridge begins. It is said that Rama in his war against Ravana made a bridge across the sea to Ceylon from this point.

† Purnsattama is modern Puri, one of the holiest pilgrimages in India.

‡ Udradesa was perhaps Orissa,—rather the hilly parts of modern Orissa.

§ *Kamaksha* Devi is near Gouhati in Assam. Her temple stands on the top of a high hill. This must be the Nilparvata mentioned here.

¶ Bangadesa is Bengal. This *Kalika* is the celebrated Goddess at Kalighat near Calcutta.

¶¶ Ajodhya is in Oudh.

** Kurushkhetra is near Delhi; its modern name is Thaneshwar.

†† Vraja is near Mathura. Srikrishna was brought up here amongst the cow-herds. See my Srikrishna, His Life and Teachings.

‡‡ Darika is modern Dwarka in Guzrat. It was the chief city of the Yajus, one of whom was Srikrishna. It is one of the most important pilgrimages in India.

¶¶¶ Mathura was the birth place of Srikrishna. It is now the head quarter of a District in the United Provinces.

fort-night and the eleventh day of the white fortnight. *

Thou art the daughter of *Dakhyā* and the destroyer of his *Yagma*. Thou art *Janaki*, the wife of *Rama*, and thou art the destroyer of *Ravana*. Thou art the Slayer of *Raktavija*, and thou art the Goddess *Chandika* in the destruction of *Chandamanda*.

Thou art the Chastiser of *Sumbha* and *Nishumbha*,—thou art the slayer of *Madhukaitava*. † *G* *Durga*, thou art the giver of the DEVOTIONAL LOVE towards *Vishnu*,—Thou art the Giver of Happiness and *MOKSHA* (Emancipation)."

"In my front sits *Jaya*,—in my back sits *Vijaya*, in

In the Vol. I. we have mentioned *fifty one Pitas*. Please compare the above with it. This is quoted from the *Brahma Jamala Tantra*.

* We would ask our readers to compare the above with the following quoted from the *Gita*.

"I am the self in the body of all beings. I am the beginning, the middle and the end of every thing. I am *Vishnu* amongst the *Adityas*, the resplendent *Sun* amongst all shining bodies. I am *Maichī* amongst the *Marutas* and the Moon amongst all constellations. I am the *Sama Veda* amongst the *Vedas*,—I am mind amongst the senses, and I am consciousness in all living things. I am *Sankara* amongst the *Rudras*, *Vajra* amongst the *Yakshas*, *Paavaka* amongst the *Vasus* and *Meru* amongst all mountain peaks. I am *Urighu* among all *Rishis*, *Om* among all words &c. &c."

† These are the names of various Asuras, Demons, mentioned in the *Chandi* and other *Puranas*.

my head sits NARAYANI, and my whole body is pervaded by the Rider of the lion." * †

Such being the GREAT MOTHER, her loving devotees could not rest satisfied with themselves *Seeing* HER,—*feeling* HER,—*conceiving* HER and *adoring* and *worshipping* HER,—they showed Her to others ;—they showed the blind and the ignorant how to go to their bountiful, ever-merciful,—ever-kind GREAT MOTHER. They pointed out the means and ways ; and thus *Saktism* as the Religion of Sakti was formed ; and it soon grew to be a MIGHTY POWER amongst the Hindus. †

* We have already mentioned *Jaya* and *Vijaya* as the two faithful and loving companions of Durga.

Narayani is one of the names of Sakti. *Sinhavahini*,—the rider of the lion. Please see the Chandi as given in the I. Volume of this work.

What could be more grand and beautiful than the above lines ? One could find hardly greater DEVOTIONAL LOVE any where else. "God pervades my body"—what could better express one's great love towards God ?

† We have already said that the Sakti Worship had its origin in the holy Vedas. We shall trace its history, from the earliest days,—but we must here mention that the later day Saktism and its various and numerous accretions, additions and interpolations are not what Saktism really is. . .

Saktism was variously explained and inculcated and promulgated and took different shapes in different countries,—nay it became quite a big religion among the Buddhists of the countries beyond India.

Perhaps we need not mention that innumerable works called *Tantras* were written to promulgate the various phases of Saktism. We shall speak about the *Tantras* later on.

CHAPTER II.

The Early History of Saktism.

When was the Worship of Sakti introduced in India? The answer would be,—from the earliest times,—from the time of the holy Vedas. * ′

The great Buddha appeared in the sixth century B. C.,—there is no dispute about that;—and we can very well prove that Saktism in a form,—if not exactly in the form in which it now flourishes,—was extant at the Buddha's time.

Just after one hundred years after the death of the Buddha, his religion was split up into two distinct branches,—thereafter to be known as the Southern and the Northern Buddhism.

This schism openly took place from the time of the Second Council of the Buddhist monks which was held at Vessali, just one hundred years after the great Preacher's death. The minority stuck to the strict Doctrines of the Order (Sangha) as laid down by the Buddha himself, but the majority adopted new innovations, or rather they openly accepted the religion of the people as it then was.

And what was this religion? We can get a clear description of it from the Northern Buddhism, for it

* We are bound to prove this and we shall make an humble attempt to do it in this chapter.

was Northern Buddhism which adopted almost every thing of Hinduism of that period. A great European Scholar writes :—

“Maha-Brahma is often named, whereas Vishnu, the popular God of the Hindus is, we have seen, represented by Padmapani (Avolokiteswara) who seems to have taken his place. Turning to God Siva, we may note that he was adopted by Buddhism in his character of Yogi and Mahayogi. Then do the Buddhism of the north very soon become corrupted with Saivism and its accompaniments Saktism, Tantrikism and Magic, so in the northern country various forms of Siva, such as Mahakala, Bhairava, Bhima, and of his wife, Parvati, Durga and their hundreds of images are found in temples. Sometimes bloody sacrifices are offered. Amongst the female deities the forms of Tara are chiefly worshipped and regarded as the Saktis of the Buddhas.

The Buddha did not speak of the Trinity, but his “Buddha, Dharma and Sangha” were afterwards made to be a sort of Trinity as that of the Hindu Triad,—namely Brahma, Vishnu and Siva. They called these three, *Mauja Sree* (He of beautiful glory), *Avolokiteswara* (the lord that looks down) whom they also called *Padmapani* (lotus-handed) and *Vajrapani* (the wielder of the thunderbolt). Virtually these were *Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, or Indra or Rudra* of the Hindus.

In *Adi Buddha*, they also accepted the Hindu Maha

Brahma,—*Infinite One*,—a subject the great Master always avoided discussing, but never prevented his lay-followers from believing and worshipping.”

Another great European scholar thus writes about the Tantrika system and Saktism as found in the religion of the Buddha :—“The founder of this system seems to have been *Asanga*, an influential monk of Peshwar in the Punjab who lived and wrote the first Text Book of the creed,—the *Yogachara Dharma Shashtra*,—about the first century of our era. Hiouen Thesang, who travelled in the first half of the seventh century, found the Monastery where *Asanga* had lived, and says that he lived one thousand years after the Buddha. He managed with great dexterity to reconcile the two opposing systems by placing a number of Saiva Gods, both male and female, in the inferior heavens of the prevalent Buddhism, representing them as worshippers and supporters of the Buddha and Avolokiteshwara. He thus made it possible for the half converted and rude tribes to remain Buddhists while they brought offerings to their more congenial shrines and while their practical belief had no relation at all to the Truths or the Noble Eightfold Paths. They busied themselves almost wholly with obtaining magic powers (*Siddhi*) by means of magic phases (*Dharanis*) and magic circles (*Chakras*).”

Thus do we find that only about one hundred years after the great Buddha's death, his religion

* Sir Monier William's Buddhism.

absorbed much of Hinduism, and in it we find both Saivism and Saktism almost in their complete forms. It clearly shows that Saivism and Saktism were prevalent in India at the time of the Buddha.

We have proved that Saivism or the worship of Siva was prevalent amongst the Aryas long before the birth of the Buddha. We have also shown that the worship of Sakti was a very early institution in India,—but was Saktism, or as we understand it now, known amongst the Aryas of ancient India?

Before we answer this question, we must say what Saktism is. But we must first point out that Sakti or the Great Force of the Supreme One was spoken of, and adored by the holy Vedic Rishis.

We quote a few lines from the well-known *Sukta* 129 of the 10th Mandala of the Rigveda. Rishi Prajapati sings :—

“What is not, was not. What is, also was not. There was no Earth, no Sky. There was nothing high, nor anything to cover it. Then there is no mortality, neither was there immortality,—only ONE without a SECOND was there. There was nothing else besides HIM. That ALL-PERVADING ONE existed covered by non-existing things. By *Tapasya* that ONLY ONE was born. In the first beginning, ICCHA appeared.” *

* The whole of the greatest of the Hindu Philosophies is based on this ICCHA or KAMA, i. e., DESIRE, or WILL or FORCE of the Supreme One. We have tried to explain IT in our humble

And what is this ICHHA. The holy Vedas declare that this great ICHHA was the CAUSE of the Unknowable Existence of the Supreme One in this world,—beyond that all is incomprehensible.

This Hymn is the beginning of the Hindu Philosophy. Perhaps this was the beginning of all Religions. And undisputedly this was the beginning of the Sakti-Worship.

What is then this incomprehensible ICHHA. The Rishi says :—*Kamasthagra*—first appeared KAMA.

This KAMA has been described in the Hindu Philosophy as PRAKRITI or MAYA. Sankara calls HER *indescribable*,—beyond human comprehension.

From this great unknowable KAMA appeared the Universe. Therefore SHE is nothing but this incomprehensible SAKTI,—THE FORCE.

Thus was SAKTI recognised and felt by the holy Rishis of the holy Vedas. Man cannot go beyond, behind or above HER,—so declared the Vedic Rishis.

Did the Vedic Rishis worship this Sakti or SOME ONE else ?

One Rishi sings :—

“In the beginning only HIRANYA GARVA existed. †

way. Whom great Sankara, having failed to describe, called *indescribable*, it is presumptuous on our part to try to explain HER.

* This is the Hymn 121 of the 10th Mandala of the Rig Veda.

† HIRANAYA GARVA literally means. GOLDEN EGG. The Rishi described the *Nirguna Brahma* by this word. He is

As soon as He was *born*,^{*} he became the Lord of all beings without Second. He placed the sky and the earth in their proper places. To whom should we offer oblations and which God should we worship ?”

“He who has given us sons, he who has given us strength, whose commands all the Gods obey ; whose shadow is ambrosia,—whose slave is death,—which God should we worship ?”

“He who has become the Secondless Monarch of all living things, He who is the Lord of all these bipeds and quadrupeds,—which God should we worship ?”

“By whose glory all these snowy mountains are produced,—the Oceans and Rivers are whose creations,—all these directions are whose arms,—which God should we worship ?”.

We need not quote more. The holy Rishi thus beautifully ends this great Hymn.

“O Lord of beings,—nonelse but You have created all this. Let the desire with which we are worshipping

Inert,—non acting—beyond and above human comprehension, If such was the case, what could man possibly do to *know Him*, to *see Him* and to *feel Him*. But He did not remain *inert* for ever,—the Rishi says “He took birth.” How ? By the appearance of ICCHA (desire) in Him, and the result was the Creation of the Universe. *Purusha* with the addition, or unity with this ICCHA or KAMA or PRAKRITI,—becomes *Saguna* and *Comprehensible*. Evidently the great Rishi in the above Hymn adores Him, or Her. He asks the question at the end of each verse, “Which God should we worship ?” The answer is clearly SAKTI.

you be fulfilled ; let us be the lord of our desired wealth."

The Vedic Rishis called this God Varuna and Agni, and they worshipped Him in hundred other names. They worshipped and adored almost every phenomena of the Universe—not every phenomenon literally in their physical sense,—but they worshipped the GREAT DIVINE FORCE—the GREAT ŚAKTI,—that lay in them and behind and beyond them.

Thus do we find that ŚAKTI was adored and worshipped by the greatly holy, God-seeing divine Rishis of the Vedic times. They called her by various names,—that was all. †

* This is distinctly worshipping *Suguna Isvara*. But the Rishi has not named him,—he repeatedly asked the question 'Which God should we worship? We can understand ŚAKTI, because SHE was the PRIMAL CAUSE of our existence, real or unreal. In fact if we carefully study the Vedic Hymns, we find the Aryas adored and worshipped the GREAT FORCE of the Supreme One in various names. This we have fully discussed in our "History of the Hindu Religion" Parts I. and II.

† We can quote various passages from the Rig Vedic Hymns to prove our assertions,—but we think it is not necessary. We must mention that as Sati, Śakti, Durga, Kālī and in her hundred of other names as she is now adored and worshipped, she was not adored by the Vedic Rishis. But what is there in the name? In whichever name they adored their GOD,—they adored His INFINITE UNKNOWABLE FORCE ;—they adored His ŚAKTI. They knew and repeatedly declared,—“He is unknowable,—beyond human comprehension :—but he is knowable when his *Ichha*, His

In the Brahmanical period of the Aryan history,—this pure and simple worship of God,—this heartfelt devotional Love towards the Supreme Father,—was replaced, or rather overwhelmed with the greatly complicated and awfully expensive rites and ritualism of the Brahmanas, and the Yagmas grew supreme and all other things were pushed away to a back seat. We do not thus find any trace of Sakti Worship in the literature of this period, but we do not say that there was no Sakti-Worship when the Aryas were immersed in the Ritualistic religion of the Brahmanas. All could not possibly follow the religion of the Brahmanas,—all could not perform the Yagmas and Rites and Rituals of the *Yayur Veda* and *Sama Veda*;—there were men who silently and devotionally worshipped Sakti. We have pointed out that even her Pouranika name *Uma-Haimavati* is found in the Kota Upanishad,—in which She appears as the greatest Goddess over all Gods. This clearly indicates Sakti-Worship.—If not prominently, but silently was it prevalent amongst many of the Aryas of the Brahmanical age.

Force, His Sakti, His Prakriti appeared;—then this Universe appeared and then HE WITH SHE became comprehensible,—then He is known, seen, and felt by the devotees. The Vedic Rishis saw *Him* and they saw *Her* in *Him*.

CHAPTER III.

When Saktism grew to be a Religion.

When then the *Worship of Sakti* came to be a separate and distinct religion in India ?

We have seen that the idea of Sakti is to be found in the sacred Hymns of the holy Vedas ;—we have also seen that this Sakti has been much elaborated and developed in the Upanishads and the Vedanta. In them this Sakti has been given a very high place in the names of Prakriti, Pradhana, Maya and others. But it is evident She was not separately worshipped as a great Goddess,—nor had She a separate religion, when the Aryas followed the Ritualistic and Sacrificial Religion of the Brahmanas and the deep Philosophy of the Upanishads. But very soon were these costly and complicated Rites and Rituals replaced, if not amongst all, but amongst the majority of the ancient Aryas, by simple worships of one, or the other chief Gods, such as Siva and Vishnu,—or the worship of Incarnations, such as Rama and Krishna. The deep philosophy of the Upanishads grew to be so hard to master,—that many were scared away from them ; therefore the Vedantic philosophy was simplified in the poetic garb, and its Prakriti or Pradhana or Maya was made a separate and distinct great Goddess who was

worshipped in the names of Durga, Chandika, Kali and hundreds of other names.

When all this came about, it is very difficult now to say definitely ;—but there is absolutely no doubt that this happened at a very early age. And we have already shown that the worship of Sakti and Saktism was a distinct religion at least many years before the birth of the Buddha.

By the side of the Rig-Vedic, Yayur-Vedic and Sama-Vedic religion, there was amongst the Aryas the Religion of the Atharva-Veda from the earliest days. The Rig Veda is a collection of Hymns,—these Hymns have been arranged in the Yayur Veda and Sama Veda in the order in which the different Yagmas are to be performed, and in which Yagmas, these Hymns are to be recited. But in all these Yagmas,—nowhere any of the Hymns of the Atharva Veda are used. The Atharva Vedic Hymns are quite a different and distinct class ; *

* The great Vedic scholar Pandit Satya Brata Samarsami says :—

The Hymns that are required to perform the ordinary Vedic Yagmas were collected and arranged by the original Veda Vyasa and were respectively named Rig, Yayur, and Sama :— but the other Hymns that are required for the performance of the Yagmas specially intended to obtain worldly gains, health, and to destroy enemies &c. were arranged by the Rishi Atharvan of the Angirasha family, and therefore this collection of Hymns was known as the Atharva Veda. Some say that as these Hymns are not used in any of the Yagmas mentioned in the Sama and Yayur Veda, therefore they are called Atharva."

and they inculcated a class of quite different and distinct Yagmas. The Atharva Vedic Yagmas never used the Hymns of the Rig, Sama or Yayur Veda,—nor did they ever use its Hymns. Thus do we find that the Atharva Vedic religion and Rites and Rituals stood side by side with those of the other three Vedas and formed a distinct entity.

The Vedic religion desired to obtain happiness here and hereafter; the Atharva Vedic religion rather thought of the world more than any thing else. It promulgated Yagmas that were supposed to bestow many worldly benefits,—such as freedom from diseases,—enjoyments of perfect health,—long life and perpetual youth,—destruction of wild animals and enemies,—safety from Nature's disturbances and so forth. This Veda might be safely called the mother of all Occultism and of many of the Sciences such as Indrajala, Alchemy, Magic &c. &c. In later age all these were elaborately developed in

Some say that this Atharva Veda is a later work. In such ancient works as *Aitarrya* and *Satapatha Brahmana* and *Vrihat Aranyaka* and *Chhandagya Upanishad*,—only Rig, Sama and Yayur Vedas are mentioned. There is absolutely no mention of the Atharva. (See *Aitarrya Brahmana* 5. 32. *Satapatha Brahmana* 4. 6. 7. 13. *Vrihat Aranyaka Upanishad* 1. 5. 5. and *Chhandagya Upanishad* 3. 1. and 7. 1. &c. &c.)

In very ancient Dharma Sastras and Sanhitas also, only three Vedas are mentioned and there is no mention of the Atharva. (See Goutama 16, 21, Vashishta 13 30, Bodhayana 4 5. 29, Manu Sanhita, 3 145. 11. 263; 12. 112. &c., &c.)

Tantrikism which took for its great Goddess, Sakti, in her hundreds of different names.

To give our readers an idea of the Atharva Veda, so that they may follow the steps through which it developed into Tantrikism, we give here a translation of one of its Hymns.

“From the place of light,—from the earth, from the sky, from the sea, from the fire, from the wind,—i. e. from the portions of all these, the *Oshadhi* plant, named *Madhukasha* grows. Gathering such *Madhukasha*, all men become greatly happy by using its ambrosia-like juice.

The men of the world, by using it in different ways, have shown its different effects. It looks golden-coloured,—its juice is gummy. It certainly empowers man and woman to procreate when it is drunk.

Who is there who can understand the real and true merit of such *Madhukasha*, and who is there who has examined all its qualities, effects and attributes! He who is learned in the four Vedas, who is the spectator of all *Yagmas*, who is called Brahmana,—that greatly intelligent One,—is He not ever happy in it?

As the Soma Rasa is the favourite of the *Aswinas* in the *Yagmas*,—O *Aswinas*, this *Madhukasha* is equally favourite of mine. By your grace, let *Varcha* grow in me by drinking its juice.” *

Thus do we find,—along with the *Yagmas* of Rig,

* This is a translation of the first Hymn of the 10th Mandala of the Atharva Veda.

Sama and Yayur Vedas,—there were also *Yagmas* of the *Atharva Veda*.

As the religion of the ancient Aryas branched off into distinct lines,—one being the Ritualistic Religion of the Brahmanas and the other being the Philosophic Religion of the Vedanta,—so in later days, the Aryan Religion came to possess two distinct features,—one was *Mukti*,—*Moksha*,—the Eternal Union with the Supreme One and Cessation of all Births, and the other was the Acquirement of *Great Powers*—supernatural and extraordinary powers,—so that one could command health, happiness, power and every thing in this life.

Former was highly developed in the Vedanta,—the latter was started by the *Yoga Sastra* of Pātanjali. But he decried them and asked the Yogees to discard them and to shut their eyes to these extraordinary powers which he named *Astha Siddhi* or *Astha Aisharchya*, and to attempt to obtain the Eternal Union with Brahman.

What the *Yoga Sastra* discarded, the *Tantras* made them their chief aim. Though the final object of the Tantrikism is surely *Moksha*,—yet it rather gave its attention more to the acquirements of wordly powers than to any thing else. *

* When we shall deal with the *Tantras*, we shall speak more elaborately of these matters. As Yogees acquired great supernatural powers by practising *Yoga*:—so many others acquired them by going through the different Tantric *Sadhana*s. They might be called the Occultism of Hinduism.

These two systems,—namely *Yoga Practices* and the *Tantrika Sadhanas*,—went on developing side by side from the earliest times. The *Yoga* discarded supernatural and extraordinary powers,—the *Yoga* shut its eyes to all worldly matters,—whereas Tantrikism certainly did not do it. It took its key from the ancient Atharva Veda and went on developing those steps and practices that bestowrd on its votaries extraordinary and supernatural powers, by which they could acquire health, wealth and power,—by which they could cure diseases and conquer death,—by which they could destroy wild animals and poisonous snakes,—by which they could take revenge on their enemies,—by which they could counteract the baneful influences of Nature and so forth.

We have seen that at the time of the Buddha, the *Yoga Practices* were in full swing. The Buddha himself practised them for six long years. A few years after his death,—we find that Tantrikism had been introduced into his religion in full force,—therefore it is quite evident that both the *Yoga Practices* * as well as the *Tantrika Sadhanas* were in existence in India when the Buddha was born.

We can, therefore, safely say that long before the birth of Buddha, when the Puranas were inculcating

* We have given a short account of the *Yoga* practices in the previous pages. We shall give by and by some idea of the *Tantrika Sadhanas*. Our readers must not think that all *Tantrike Sadhanas* are loathesome.

the worship of Siya and Vishnu and Rama, Krishna and others,—a set of works called *Tantrās* were being written and composed which promulgated Tantrikism all over India.

In Tantrikism, Sakti became the Supreme Goddess. She became the great Goddess of all Goddesses,—She became the great Mother.

In later day Vedic Brahmanism, animal sacrifices became prevalent. Such *Yagmas* as *Gomedha*,—*Ashwamedha*,—even *Naramedha*,—became somewhat common. In such Sacrifices hundreds of animals were sacrificed, and some Hindus took great pleasure in eating them. In the later day Vedic Hinduism, both wine and meat became the chief factors of all such rites and rituals. *

As many people protested against the hard and fast, complicated and expensive, ritualism of the Brahmanas and went to study, promulgate and practise the Philosophic Religion of the Upanishads,—so again

* We believe we shall not have to quote instances from the various Sastras to prove this. No Vedic *Yagma* could be solemnised without *Soma Rasa* (a sort of fermented wine). In many *Yagmas*, animal sacrifice was absolutely necessary. We have quoted from an Edict of king Asoka to show what great animal sacrifices were made at his time. The Buddhism was mainly a strong protest against this destruction of animals in the name of religion. Even many Hindus protested against it, as Vaisnavism clearly indicates. When Saivism was introduced, even in it, there was no animal sacrifice.

did many protest against animal sacrifices in the *Yagmas*,—against drinking of *Soma Rasa* and eating the meat of various animals. In Vaishnavism,—in which Vishnu was adored,—the use of meat and drink was strictly prohibited. In Saivism too, it was almost discarded.

But once a thing had entered into a religion,—once it had formed a part of it,—it can by no means be totally banished from it. Such was the case as regards wine and meat in the Hindu religion. It was taken up by the *Tantras*, and the Vedic animal sacrifices became a part of the Tantrika worship.

It was a natural sequence. There must have been many people to whom wine and meat and the animal sacrifices and such rites were favourite,—they could not by any means abandon them. When the others abandoned the complicated and costly Vedic *Yagmas* and adopted the simple worship of Siva or Vishnu, thereby giving up animal sacrifice, those, that were fond of it, naturally sought some simple worship in which they could retain their favourite animal sacrifice. Sakti naturally occurred to them as their great Goddess,—and thus in a natural course,—the worship of Sakti and Saktism with the *Atharva Vedic Tantrikism* grew to be a distinct and independent religion in India. *

* We must mention here that animal sacrifice was not universal amongst the Vedic Aryas. There were many *Yagmas* performed in which animal were not sacrificed. In them only honey, ghee and other simple things were used. Thus is it certain that there

were men amongst the Aryas from the earliest times who did not like animal sacrifice. There were others again who were eager after it. Perhaps the warrior clan and the converted Non-Aryans were the chief amongst this class. And most likely on the gradual disappearance of the Vedic Ritualism, these men formed amongst them the great Tantrika and Śakti Religion which very soon spread all over India,—evidently holding a great sway over the country where the Non-Aryan converts generally used to live.

We need not give chapter and verse to prove this. We refer our readers to numerous works written by European scholars.

CHAPTER IV.

Animal Sacrifice and Saktism.

We find that the animal sacrifice was a great Vedic Institution and we also find that it was and still is a great institution in Saktism. What we find amongst the worshippers of Sakti is nothing but the Vedic rites in a different garb ; therefore to understand it,—we must go to its original source.

What was then these animal sacrifices in the Vedic Yagmas ? A great European Scholar writes :—"Sacrifice is all imitation of the chief phenomenon of the sky and the atmosphere. Now it is a notion as old as the race, that a thing ardently wished for may be made to come to pass in reality, by performing or reproducing that thing in effigy. This strange aberration was one of those that died hardest, for we find it very much alive down to the later middle ages in the form of that of spell of the Black Art which consisted in making a wax effigy of an enemy, then melting it over

* We must mention here that neither do we support animal sacrifice, nor do we condemn it. We do not at all express any opinion. We place before our readers only historical facts ;—our personal opinion has nothing to do in this matter. There were animal sacrifices amongst the ancient Aryans, and they had their justification for them. We give them as we find them.

a slow fire or sticking a fire into the place where the heart should be, in the expectation that the person treated thus in effigy would waste away with consumption or heart-break. The custom of executing criminals by burning or hanging obnoxious persons in effigy, when they are out of reach is already based in the same primitive idea. Sacrifice, looked at from this point of view, could be then a sort of beneficent conjuring in accordance with the bright and genial Aryan spirits, while the dark and lowering Turanian nature revels in spells and incantations for malicious and injuring purposes." *

The most mysterious and the most important of

* Many European scholars have written in this strain, but we need not say that we are sorry we cannot agree with them. We quote here what we have written about these *Yagmas* in another place. We wrote :—

We beg to impress upon our readers that we do not agree with those European scholars who consider them to be foolish superstition,—unprofitable and ungracious Ritualism,—a mine of impostures,—created by the scheming Brahmans for their own sole gain. We believe that the Sacrifice was not humbuggism, pure and simple,—but it was a Science,—a great Science, based on Scientific truths, and the Sacrifices properly performed did really bestow on the Sacrificers what they desired to get from the Gods. Humbuggism cannot live long ;—this Vedic Sacrificial Religion lived in India for many hundreds of years, and it only died when the Brahmans lost their old great *Knowledge*. If the Sacrifices did not produce any tangible benefits, the people would have thrown them overboard within a very short time, notwithstanding all the schemings of the Brahmans.

the Sacrificial Hymns in the Rig Veda is the celebrated Purusha Sukta. *

In it GREAT PURUSA was sacrificed by the Gods. † We quote a few lines from this great Hymn.

“PURUSHA, of the thousand heads, the thousand eyes, the thousand ears, the thousand feet, covered the earth in all directions and extended ten finger-breadths beyond.”

“When the Gods prepared the Sacrifice with the PURUSHA as the offering, the Spring was the Sacrificial butter, the Summer was the fuel, the Autumn was the libation.”

“On the Sacrificial grass (*Kusha*), they anointed the Victim, that PURUSHA, who was born in the beginning. Him the Gods sacrificed whose favour is to be sought by the Rishis.”

* This celebrated Hymn is the 90th of the 10th Mandala of the *Rig-Veda*. It is also to be found in the *White Yajur Veda*,—it is also to be found in the *Atharva-Veda*, XIX 16. and in *Vajshanya Samhita*, XXXI. 1-16.

It has been translated by Weber, Muir, Colebrooke, Miller and many others.

It is perhaps the perennial source of all animal sacrifices that were gradually introduced in many of the Vedic Yagnas,—culminating in even human sacrifices which were, however, very few and far between and were strictly confined amongst the Non-Aryan converts.

† In ordinary Vedic Sacrifices, animals, such as goats, cows, horses were sacrificed,—here the Gods sacrificing the great *Purusha* himself. Who can say that this great Hymn was not the origin of all animal sacrifices?

"When the Sacrifice was completed, they collected the fat dripping from it. It formed the creatures of the air and the animals that live in forests."

"When they divided PURUṢA, into how many parts did they cut him up? What was His mouth, what were His arms, what were His thighs, and feet called."

"When the Gods bound PURUṢA as Victim, preparing the Sacrifice, seven enclosing bars of wood were placed for him, thrice seven layers of fuel were piled over him." *

* Compare with this the following Hymn of the Rig Veda. 1. 162. It gives a description of a Horse Sacrifice.

"When they lead by the bridle, the richly adorned courser, the omniform goat Vishwarupa is led bleating before him, Pashan's allotted share. He will be welcome by all the Gods. Twashtar will conduct him to high honours. When men lead the horse, according to custom, three times round the place of Sacrifice, the goat goes before and is killed first to announce the Sacrifice of the Gods. The priest, the assistant, the carver taker, (who is to divide the carcass), he who lights the fire, he who works the pressing stones, and the inspired singer of Hymns will all fill their bellies with the flesh of this well prepared offering. Those who fashion the post to which the victim is to be bound and those who bring it and those who fashion the knob on tops of it and those who bring together the cooking vessels, — may their friendly helps also not be wanting !

The sleek courser is now proceeding ;—my prayer goes with him to the abode of the Gods,—followed by the joyful songs of the priests,—this banquet makes him one with the Gods.

"So the Gods, through Sacrifice, earned a right to sacrifice,—these were the first Ordinances." *

Dr. Haug thus remarks on the animal sacrifices of the Vedas.

"The animal is Sacrificed instead of the Sacrificer himself. The animal, when sacrificed in the fire, goes to the Gods, and so does the Sacrificer in the shape of the animal. The animal sacrifice is vicarious. Being thus received among the Gods, the Sacrificer is deemed worthy to enjoy the divine beverage the Soma and participates in the heavenly king who is Soma. The drinking of the Soma Juice makes him a new man. Although a new celestial body had been prepared for him at the *pravagya* ceremony,—the enjoyment of the Soma beverage transforms him again, for the nector of the Gods flows for the first time in his veins, purifying

* One great scholar thus explains this great Hymn.

Parusha,—the primeval Male Principle,—the *Man*,—is the victim whom the Gods offer up, and the dissection of whose body, — which is simply *the material to work with*,—the *whole pre-existing matter*,—with its latent possibilities for generating life,—produces the various parts of the Universe with their denizens,—of course with special reference to our earth.

Dr. Rajendra Lall Mitter in his *Indo-Aryans*, vol. I. pp. 361-363 writes :—

In the account of *Ashwamedha*, the Taittiriya Brahmana recommends 180 domestic animals to be sacrificed, including horses, bulls, cows, goats, deer, Nilgais, &c. A number of wild animals were likewise, on such occasions, brought to the sacrificial posts, but they were invariably let loose after consecration.

and sanctifying him. This last birth to the complete enjoyment of all divine right is symbolically indicated in the light of the morning libation.”*

In conformation and illustrating this, two short extracts may be given from the Aitarya and the Kaus-tukhi Brahmanas.

“The man who is initiated in the Sacrificial mysteries offers himself to all Deities. Agni represents all Deities,— and Soma represents all Deities. When the Sacrificer offers the animal to Agni—Soma, he releases himself by being represented by the animal, from being offered to all Deities.”

He who is initiated into the Sacrificial Mysteries falls into the very mouth of Agni—Soma to be their food. That is the reason that the sacrificer kills on the day previous to the Soma Festival an animal, being devoted to Agni-Soma, thus redeeming himself from the obligation of being himself sacrificed. He then completes his Soma Sacrifice, after having thus redeemed himself and becoming free from debt.” †

But we have already said that all were not in the habit of sacrificing animals in their Yagmas.

Here is a passages from the celebrated Satapatha-Brahmana.

* Aitarya Brahmana, II. 1-3.

† Kausthaki Brahmana, 10-3. See also Huag, vol. II. p. 80. Many other passages, illustrating this, can be quoted from many other Brahmanas.

"Let him not eat the flesh of either the cow or the ox, for the cow and the ox doubtless support every thing here on earth. The Gods spoke,—“Verily, the cow and the ox support everything here. Come, let us bestow on the cow and the ox whatever vigour belongs to other species.”

“Accordingly they bestowed on the cow and the ox whatever vigour belongs to the other species of animals, and therefore the cow and the ox eat most. Hence, were one to eat the flesh of an ox or a cow, there would be, as it were, an eating of every-thing, — or as it were, a going on to the end.”

“Such one, indeed, would be likely to be born again as a strange being,—as one of whom there is evil report, such as “He has expelled an embryo from a woman,” “He has committed a sin.” Let him, therefore, not eat the flesh of cow and the ox.”

Many there were who were not disposed to enjoy these meats, though they were the offerings at the Yagmas. Thus did the time soon come when even the Ashwamedha and other animal Sacrifices became symbolical and emblematical. Colebrooke writes:—“The Ashwamedha and Purushamedha, celebrated in the manner directed by the Veda, are not really Sacrifices of horses and men. In the first mentioned ceremony, six hundred and nine animals of various prescribed kinds, domestic and wild, including birds, fish, and reptiles, are made fast,—the tame ones to twenty one posts and the wild in the interval between

the pillars. After certain prayers have been recited, the victims are let loose without injury."

"In the other, a hundred and eighty-five men of various wild tribes, character and profession are bound to eleven posts, and after the Hymns concerning the allegorical immolation of Purusha have been recited, these human victims are liberated unhurt, and oblations of butter are made on the Sacrificial fire."

Such was the Vedic Animal-Sacrifices, both real and symbolical. Whether they did any good or they did immense harm, we need not discuss here:—neither are we required in this work to go below and behind this great Mystery of Sacrifices. They existed for what they were worth, and when these animal Sacrifices grew to be so enormous that people rose against them,—they became emblematical.

We shall see by and by that when the Vedic Yagmas were replaced by the simple worship of Siva and Vishnu and other Gods and Incarnations, these animal Sacrifices were bodily taken into the religion which soon grew to be very powerful amongst the ancient Aryas.

This was Saktism:—the Worship of Sakti. It took its great Goddess from the Rig Veda:—it took its Tantrikism from the Atharva Veda:—it took its animal sacrifices from the Brahmanas; finally it took its great Philosophy from the Vedanta. Great men after great men,—as well as bad men after bad men,—wrote upon it, commented upon it,—added and interpolated

upon it,—till Tantrikism on one hand rose to the highset pinnacle of Spirituality, and on the other was dragged down to the lowest level of depravity and sin.

CHAPTER V.

Sakti and Her Forms.

Thus did Sakti worship rise upon the grand basis of the holy Vedas and the sacred Vedantas. It is not a thing taken from any rude non-aryan cult. The Linga Puranam thus describes the great Goddess, and as it

As we have elaborately dwelt upon the Hindu Image Worship in our work, "Sankara" and shown that it is not gross idolatry, man cannot but be image-worshippers,—we do not repeat it here. We shall, however, quote here an extract from an article which Keshab Chandra Sen the Great Brahmo leader wrote in the *Sunday Mirror* of 1880. He wrote :—"The Hindu idolatry is not to be altogether overlooked or rejected. As we explained sometime ago, it represents millions of broken fragments of God, called them together and you get the individual Divinity. To believe in an undivided Deity without reference to those aspects of his nature is to believe in an abstract God and it would lead us to practical rationalism and infidelity. If we are to worship Him in all his manifestations we shall name one attribute,—Saraswati, another Lakshmi, another Mahadeva, another Jagadhatrī &c. and worship God each day under a new name that is to say, in a new aspect.

For the opinions of Swami Vivekananda and others on the so-called Hindu idolatry,—we shall refer our readers to our work in "Sankara Swami."

Max Muller writes :—"There is such a decidedly non-Vedic spirit in the conception of Durga and her consort Siva that I feel inclined to trace it to some independent source. I hold there-

gives a clear conception of the Sakti-worship,—we do not hesitate to quote it in full.

“The learned men call the Supreme Soul, Siva, the Beneficial, and they call Sivani the Goddess that bestows good. They call Siva as *Ishwara* (God with attributes) and they call Gouri as *Maya*. They call Siva as *Puru-sha* and Sivani as *Prakriti*. Sambhu is the base of sound,—Sivani is the sound.

Siva is day—Sivani is night. Mahadeva is *Yagma*,—Rudrani is the *Dakshmina* (gift) in that Yogma. The God Sankara is the sky and the Goddess Sankari is the Earth. God Sulapani (the holder of trident) is the tree,—his Beloved is the creeper that entwines it. Hara is Brahma,—half of his body is Savitri; Maheswara is Vishnu, the great Goddess Vabhan is Lakshmi. Mahadeva is Indra, the daughter of the king of mountains is Sachi. Rudra is himself Agni,—the half of his body, Rudrani is Swaha. *

fore that neither Durga nor Siva can be looked upon as natural developments, not even as a conception, of the Vedic Deities.

See his *Anthropological Religion*. But with all due respects to the learned Professor, our readers have found that we have been obliged to differ from him. The Sakti worship is nothing but a natural development of the Vedic Religion. We have tried to prove it in various ways.

* One gentleman, Pundit Kedar nath Vidyavinoda, thus traces Durga in the Vedas.

“For the original conception of Durga, I beg to cite Rig Veda, 3-27-9 which is as follows:—“The daughter of *Daksha* embraces Agni (fire) that exists in every thing, that protects as father, and that is adorable for its works.”

The Deity Trāṃboka is Yama and the daughter of the mountain is his wife. The great God Rudra is Varuna and the great Goddess Gouri is the wife of Varuna who bestows all success.

Chandrasikhara * is Vayu, Vavani is the wife of Vayu named Siva. The Sashivusana is the Moon himself, Rudrani is his wife Rohini. Siva is the Sun, the Goddess Uma is his wife Subarcha. The God Tripurari is Kartikeya,—the wife of Hara is his wife *Devasena* (army of the Celestials). The God Maheswara is Dakṣha and Devi Uma is his wife Prasuti. Sambhu is the Manu named Purusha and the Beloved of Siva is his wife Satampa. The great God is Ruchi—and the great Goddess is Akuti. The God Tripurari is Vriṅgū,—the Goddess of the three eyes is his wife Khyati. The Vagavana Rudra is Marichi, and Sivani is his wife Samanti. The great God is Sukracherjea, the great Goddess is his wife Ruchira. Gangadhara is Angira, and Uma is Smriti. Sashishekhera is Pulasta—his wife is Priti. Tripurari is Pulaha,—his wife the great God-

In Vedic times the Sacrificial Altar was termed the daughter of Dakṣha. The fact that the Sacrificial Altar contains fire, or the daughter of Dakṣha embraces Agni, is the very germ of conception that Durga has for her consort Siva, who is no other than Agni, the term Rudra having been applied to both.

Sakti is Kāḥi—Darkness—the original state of the Universe, vide the Vedic song “At first it was all DARKNESS.” And this DARKNESS is *Kāḥi*,—Sakti,—our Great Mother.

* These are different names of Śiva and Sakti.

dess is Dayu. The destroyer of Daksha Yagma is Kratu, and the Goddess is Samati. The three eyed God is Atri, and Uma is his wife Anusuya. The great God is Vashista,—Uma is the old Urja. Sankara is all the males,—Maheshwari is all females. Whatever there is in this Universe which signify masculine things are all great God Rudra, and all that are feminine, are the portions of the Goddess Gouri. The male and the female are the *Viruli* (Attributes) of these Two. All material forces and matters are the Devi,—the greatest Goddess of the Universe, and all spiritual forces in these matters are the Siva. The eight *Prakritis* (natures) and eight *Vikritis* (contrary natures) are the images of the Goddess. As there are innumerable sparks in a fire, so Siva with two forms dwell in the body of all beings. The body of beings are but the forms of Gouri and all beings are but portions of Siva. All that is to be heard in the Universe is but the Forms of Uma and Siva existing as the hearer. The great God is the Enjoyer and the great Goddess is in all things to be enjoyed. The beloved of Sankara is all the Created things,—the God Chandrasekhara is the Creator. The Goddess of the Universe is all phenomenal visible objects, the God of the Universe, Sashishekara, is the seer and spectator. All moisture and juice and all smells are the forms of Uma,—the Lord of the world,—Siva is the taster and smeller of all of them. Whatever there is to be judged in this Universe is but the great Goddess, and Siva is the sole judge. All that is to be understood

is Vavani, and Siva is the only one who understands." +

Such is the great Goddess of the Puranas as well as of the Tantras. Such is the GREAT MOTHER of all the worshippers of Sakti.

In innumerable allegorical Forms, SHE has been conceived. The Agni Puranam thus describes some of them.

"Chandi has twenty arms. She holds in her right hands, a *Sula*, *Sakti*, *Ashi*, *Chakra*, *Kheta*, *Ayudha*, *Avaya*, *Damura*, and *Saktika*; † and in her left hand she holds *Nagapasa*, *Khatanka*, *Kudhara*, *Ankusha*, *Dhanu*, *Ghanta*, *Dhwaja*, *Gada*, *Adarsa* and *Mudgara*. ‡

* After reading the above Pouranika quotation,—we think none will be ready to follow the lead of Professor Max Muller and say that the conception of Durga has not its source in the Vedic religion,—but they are rather borrowed from the non-aryan cults. Perhaps none will now call Sakti as a Demon Goddess,—a horrible Goddess,—a Goddess of the grossest superstition.

The above quotation is but the repetition of the Vedic ideas,—Vedic theories and Vedic conceptions,—no Purana has ever deviated an inch from the holy Vedas. They expressed the Vedic ideas and the Vedic religion in an other garb,—that is all. The idea and theory expressed by the author of the Linga Puranam as quoted above are but the Vedantic theories of the GREAT GOD. They never said that Sakti is a separate and independent Goddess. She is but the Half of the great God,—ever *United* with Him. Therefore She is no other than the great Varuna-Agni of the Rigveda and the Purusha-Prakriti of the Upanishads. Men, blinded by prejudice, can say that She is a non-aryan demon-goddess,—or she is a horrible creation of some depraved mind.

† These are different weapons.

‡ *Nagpasa* is the noose of snakes. *Ankura*—goad,—*Ghanta* bell,—*Gada*—club,—*Mudgra*—hammer and so forth. We need not translate them all.

Chandi has ten arms. Under her feet lies the headless Baffallo,—that beast in anger holds up its arms. From his neck rises a male being ;—in the hand of that male being, there is a *Sula* (weapon) ;—he vomits blood. His hair, his garlands, his eyes, are crimson. *

That being is bound by the noose round his neck,—he is being attacked by the lion. The right leg of Chandi is placed on the shoulder of the lion and her left leg on that of the Asura.

This three-eyed, fully armed, Goddess, the Destroyer of enemies and Bestower of safety should be worshipped in a holy place in her own Form. †

Chandi has another form with eighteen arms. She holds in her right hands *Munda* (head), *Adarsha* (looking glass), *Tarjani*, *Chopa*, *Dhwaja*, *Damuri* and *Vasa* ; and she holds in her left hand, *Sakti*, *Mudgara*, *Sula*, *Vajra*, *Kharga*, *Ankusa*, *Sara*, *Chakra*, and *Saloka*.

All the other Forms have sixteen arms. These Forms are called *Rudra Chanda*, namely *Rudrachanda*, *Prachanda*, *Chandogra*, *Chandanayika*, *Chanda*, *Chandavati*,

* We have already said, to explain all these allegories is not the scope of this work. If we feel that all these symbols have esoteric significations,—we believe that is enough. After that, you can explain them in any way you like according to your inclination, taste and capacity. It will be then no idolatry.

† All these Forms must have been seen by many. In these Forms Durga is worshipped at the *Durga Puja* and *Vasanti Puja* in Bengal and in many parts of India. She is always chastising the Great Asura.

Chandarupa, Atichandika, and Ugrachanda. These nine have the following colour respectively (1) ; onion-coloured, (2) morning coloured, (3) black, (4) blue, (5) white, (6) smoky (7) yellow (8). They all stand on the back of the lion and hold in check the buffalo and the Asura that rose from its neck. These are called Nava Durgas.

The original Chandi is Gouri. She holds in her arms *Kundi*, *Akhara*, *Santa* and *Agni*. Lalita holds in her left hand, shoulder and head, and in her right hand a looking glass. Lakshmi holds in her right hand a lotus and in her left hand a bael fruit. Sharswati holds in her arms a book and *Akshamala* and a Bina (musical instrument).

Jahnvi holds in her hands a conch and a pot ; she is white in colour and rides a Makara (a water animal).

Jamuna is black in colour ; she holds a water pot in her hand and she rides on a tortoise.

Tambora is white in colour. He holds the *Sula* and the *Bina* and rides on a bull,—placed in front of the mother.

Gouri has four faces,—she is an ascetic and holds in her hand *Akshamala*.

Sankari is white in colour,—she rides on a gander ; she holds in her left hand *Kunda* and *Akshapatra* and in her right hand bow and arrow.

Koumari has two arms ; she is of red colour ; she holds a Sakti in her hand,—she rides on a peacock.

Varahi rides on a buffalo and holds in her hands *Danda* (stick), *Sanha* (conch), *Asi* (sword) and *Gada*

(club). In her left side stands Lakshmi, holding club and lotus in her hands. *

Indrani has one thousand eyes and holds in her left hand the *Vajra* (thunder).

Chamunda has her three eyes sunk deep in her forehead ;—she has no flesh in her body ;—she is like a skeleton,—her hair standing upward, her belly is thin, she wears a piece of skin ; she holds in her left hand *Kapala* and *Pattisha*, and in her right hand she holds *Sakti* and *Katri*. Her ornaments are bones, and she seats on a corpse". †

Such is Sakti and such are her different Forms as described by the authors of the Puranas,—they are works which did not inculcate the worship of Sakti exclusively,—it was done by a series of works, called the Tantras, which are solely devoted to the Worship of Sakti,—to Occultism and Mysticism. ‡

* Perhaps we need not repeatedly say that these different Forms are but the Forms of Sakti alone. She is One in different names and forms.

† We ask our readers to compare this description of Sakti as given by the *Agni Purana* with that of the *Chandi* in the *Markendeya Purana*. It will be found that there is hardly any material difference in these different descriptions ;—even in the Tantras,—Sakti is not differently described. All these works inculcate many complicated ritualism about her.

‡ We shall later on describe these works and make an attempt to place before our readers what they really teach.

CHAPTER VI.

Image Worship.

We have seen that the Sakti worship has its origin in the Rig Veda Hymns. It then took into its fold all that the Atharva Veda taught.—It inculcated the animal Sacrifices of the Brahmanas in different forms ;— it adopted the deep philosophical truths of the Upanishads and clothed it in a different garb. But whence and when did it get its Image Worship ?

Though of course we do not find any image worship in the Rig Veda, yet in the Yajur Veda and Sama Veda and in the Brahmanas, we find its origin very distinct.

When the Yagmas were raised to the highest pinnacle, many things required for these Yagmas became very sacred, and their sanctity was very great. Such was the ALTAR,—such were the two pieces of wood, by the friction of which the Sacrificial Fire was kindled,—and such were many things else. So were the different Posts that were placed in the different directions of the Sacrificial place. In the course of time, these became the objects of regular worship, and they were worshipped with all solemnity. *

* Fearing that we shall simply wear out our readers by quoting passages from the Vedas and the Brahmanas to support

Thus was some sort of image worship,—though they were not the images of Gods and Goddesses, but of different objects used in the Vedic Yagmas,—introduced amongst the Aryas when the religion of the Vedas and the Brahmanas grew very powerful amongst them ;—but when these Yagmas were replaced by the simple worship of simple Gods and Goddesses,—it is quite natural that people would be led to imitate the form of worship of their forefathers,—that they would be led to worship their favourite God or Goddess in his or her IMAGE.

The Puranas have already clothed these Gods or Goddesses with human or superhuman allegorical Forms, therefore it is natural that following the example of their ancestors,—the people should make the clay, stone or wooden images of these Gods and Goddesses and worship them in all solemnity. It was but the next and natural step from the Vedic Worship of the Altar, the Sacrificial Post, and the fire-churning woods. As a matter of fact many of these became Pouranic Gods and Goddesses,—and they venerated the truth that once a thing introduced cannot be soon driven out. *

what we say above,—we refrain from it. But our readers must know that innumerable quotations might be made to prove our assertions.

* For want of space we do not give quotations,—but any one who will study the Vedas and the Brahmanas will find that some sort of image worship came to be introduced in the Aryan religion, as day by day it became more Brahmanised and old. Th

At the time when the Gita was written,—both the worship of images of Gods and Goddesses as well as that of the Incarnations had got a strong hold on the Aryan people.

The Gita says :—“Whenever Virtue languishes and Sin predominates, I create myself. I take births age after age for the protection of the good and for the establishment of the True Religion. He who truly knows my these wonderful births and deeds casts off his body and is not born again.”

“Many holy sages, who were full of ME and who were dependent on ME attained to my Essence. I bestow my favours in different ways on different men as they worship me. Men in every way follow MY path. With the desire of obtaining success in their works, men worship the Gods in this world.”

And again :—

“Those whose knowledge is stolen by various desires, observing various regulations, worship other Gods, impelled as they are by their own nature. Whichsoever different Forms of Deities a devotee worships with faith, and reverence, I make his faith steady and firm in that form. Endued with such firm faith, a devotee adores

latter day Image Worship was but its natural offspring,—the logical outcome of deep and sublime philosophy of the highly contemplative and imaginative Aryans who saw and felt everywhere the very presence of the All-Pervading Brahman.

the Diety in that form and obtains from him all that he desires, though they are really given by Me."

And again :—

"Those that worship the Devas go to the Devas,—those that worship the Pitris go to the Pitris. Those that worship ME come to ME."

We have seen that the worship of Siva Linguin was a very ancient institution in India,—it might be called the progenitor of all image worships in the Aryan land. Lingum was an Emblem,—and the worshipper of Siva did not find any harm in worshipping and adoring him, in these emblems. So did the Vaisnava also adore their Great God in an Emblem which they called *Sala-grama Sila* †. The *Tantrikas* followed the foot steps of the Saivas and the Vaisnavas and worshipped the fifty-two *Pitas* ‡ which were nothing but *Emblems* of their Great Goddess *Sakti*.

But these were not image worships in their proper sense. Hardly ever did a worshipper of Siva or Vishnu make an image of their Gods, either in wood, clay or

* Srikrishna was born some two thousand years before the birth of Christ. It is evident, image worship was in existence in India at that very early age,—and much earlier perhaps. But we must say, Tantricism made it very popular and general in India.

† This is the Emblem of Vishnu. It is a peculiar piece of stone only to be found in the river Gandaka in Oudh.

‡ We have already mentioned these fifty-two *Pita-Sthanas* where the different portions of Sati's body fell from the shoulder of Siva when cut up by Vishnu.

stone,—niether do they now. Therefore, we can say, without the fear of being contradicted, that the true image worship came into India with the spread of Tantrikism *

The following quotation from the first *Kāndika* of the first chapter of *Ashwāyālayana Srautya Sātra* will show that the Image worship is but another version of the latter day Vedic YAGMAS.

“First adopting *Srautya fire* in due form, the *Vaitanika Yagmas* should be performed; therefore the *Agnihotra* and the other *Yagmas* are called *Vaitanika*. Thus it is proved that the performers of *Atiguni* or the performers of Daily *Agnihotra* are entitled to perform them.

• We shall first describe the two *Yagmas* called *Dursa* and *Purnamasa*, because these two *Yagmas* are the chief amongst the *Ishti Yagmas* and the rules for their performance are described in the Vedas. For this reason, the *Dursa Purnamashi* is the sample of other *Ishtis* (beneficial Sacrifices).

To perform the *Hotri* of the *Dursa Purnamashi*, the *Hota* or the *Retwika* of priest should be invited by the *Jajmana* (worshipper). When the time for preparing *Habi* has come, he should first engage himself by sitting on the north of the altar in which the fire was

* We have seen that Tantrikism was in existence in India when the Buddha was born. But perhaps at this time the worshippers of Sakti worshipped and adored her in these *Pitas* (emblems) and did not make her images.

kindled. He should keep his face directed towards the east, and he should taste water or perform *Achmana* being *Yagmapaviti*. * Then keeping the *Utkara* place in the east and *Pranita* pot in the west, † he should circumambulate the *Vihara bhumi* between these two.

In those *Yagmas* in which *Pranita* pot is not required for the preparation of *Habi*,—in such *Yagmas*, *Idma* or the woods for the Sacrificial fire should be placed on the place of *Pranita* pot. ‡ In such *Yagmas* the *Vihara Bhumi* || between *Utkara* and *Idma* should be circumambulated.

In those *Yagmas* in which *Chattala* § is required,—in those *Yagmas*, the place would be *Chattala* instead of *Pranita*. In such *Yagmas* the place between *Utkara* and *Chattala* should be circumambulated.

* We need not say that every Vedic Arya used to wear the holy thread. Whenever the Arya performed any *Yagma*,—he wore his holy thread in the *Yogma Pavita* form, i. e. he wore it across his left shoulder going to his right side. In performing *Pitri Yogmas*,—he wore it across the right-shoulder going to the left side called *Prachinavati*. At all other times, he wore it round the neck like that of a garland. This is called *Niviti*.

† *Utkara* is the place where the ashes are kept from the Sacrificial fire.

‡ *Pranita* is water sanctified by *Mantras*. In this water *Habi* is cooked. The pot in which this water is kept is also called *Pranita*.

|| *Vihara* is the place in the cavity of which the sacrificial fire is kindled.

§ The *Chattala* is the hole from which earth is taken to build the altar.

The path of this circumambulation is called *Tirtha* (pilgrimage) by the Sacrificer. * By the word *Tirtha*, this path should be understood,—they are so mentioned in the Scriptures.

These acts must be considered as the first duties of the *Hota* † in all *Yagnas*.

It is the common duty of all who is engaged in performing the *Yagnas* to adopt *Aṅka Dharana* i. e. to sit in certain prescribed postures. ‡

It must be the duty of all who perform *Yagnas*, to wear their holy thread in the form indicated and to perform *Achmana* and other purification of the body. §

When some thing is performed in the *Vihara Bhumi* one should not turn his back towards it.

• Those organs and the limbs of the body that are two of the same name, i. e. eyes, ears &c, the right ones should be understood when mentioned only by name.

The advices as regards the *Yagma* performances

* This will show how from this path of circumambulation of the Sacrificial Altar, the later day pilgrimages came to be the holy places of the Hindus.

† The *Hota* is the priest who performs the *Yagma* for another.

‡ These sitting postures are described in the 31st *Sutra* of the 3rd *Kandika*.

Our readers will find that these sitting postures in the days of Patanjali's *Yoga*, were made to be almost a great Science. They are the *Asanās* of the *Yoga-Practice*.

§ This has been bodily taken in the present day worship. We refer our readers to the previous chapters in which *Siva Puja* has been described.

should be understood to be directed to the Hota only. If they are directed to the others,—they are to be mentioned by name. †

“Give away gifts,”—when such directions are found, then it should be known that they are intended for the man for whom the Yagma is performed.

The instructions and directions as regards the performance of *Homa* and *Japa* in the chapter of *Prayashchitta* (expiation)* should be known as directed for the priest called the *Brahman*.

Where the whole *pada* (Hymn) of the Rik Hymn is mentioned, in such places the whole of the Rik should be recited.

Where the whole *pada* is mentioned, then the whole of the Sukta (Hymn) should be recited.

Japa, *Anumantran*, *Avimantran*, *Apyana*, and *Upas-thana*,—where required, should be uttered in the *Upansa* form. †

* Four priests were required in the performance of the Vedic Yagmas. They were the *Hota*,—the performer of the Sacrifice,—the *Adhvarya*, the *Udgata* and the *Brahmans*, and their duties were to see that no mistakes were made by the Hota in performing the different rites and rituals of the different Vedas.

These four Vedic priests are still employed in the present day worships in another names such as *Sutradhara* &c.

† *Japa* - recitation of the Vedic *Mantras*. Each line of the Vedic Hymn is called a *Mantra*.

Anumantran is to recite the *Mantra*,—remembering its proper meaning.

Avimantran is to recite the *Mantra* remembering its meaning, at the same time looking at the Sacrificial things.

All acts must be performed by uttering the 'Mantras.' *

Such was the Vedic Sacrifice,—such was the Vedic Yagmas in which very many things were considered very sacred,—very many things were sanctified and very many hard and fast rules were strictly observed.

None of them was abandoned when the Yagmas were replaced by the *Pujas*. Images of Gods and Goddesses were made in clay or in stone or in wood as they were allegorically described in the Puranas and Tantras, and worshipped with almost all the ceremonials of the Vedic Yagmas,—though in some cases in different names, but in the majority of cases in the same names.

The worshippers of Sakti introduced IMAGES after IMAGES of their Great Mother as Her devotees conceived, imagined and dreamt Her; and millions of men bowed their heads low before these Images and saw and felt through them the presence of the Supreme Mother of the Universe and cried in devotion, faith and love :—

“Salutation to the Great Mother,—hundred times salutation to Her.”

Apyana is to recite the *Mantra*—touching water and remembering its meaning.

Upasthana is to recite it by bowing one's head and remembering its meaning.

Upansa is to utter the Mantras silently, by simply moving the tongue.

* Our readers will find that all these Vedic rites have been adopted in the later day Hinduism. We shall speak more about the *Mantras* in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

Mantras.

The *Mantras* were originally Vedic Hymns, or lines and verses of those Hymns, recited loudly ;—then they were put to music in the *Sama Veda* ;—then they were given special and great sanctity in the *Yayur Veda* ;—finally they were supposed to possess great powers in their mere recitation in proper and fixed form and sound. They were supposed to wield *great powers* of good as well as of evil, and were raised to a position as high as that of the Gods. *

* When the very ancient Vedic Hymns grew unintelligible owing to the change of the language that came over the country,—there were composed some different works which were called the Vedangas ; they are (1) Kalpa, (2) Siksha, (3) Chhanda. (4) Vyakarana, (5) Nirukta and (6) Jyotisa. They were intended to explain and to elaborate upon the Vedic Hymns and Vedic Yagmas and ceremonies.

The *Kalp*s were divided into three parts,—namely (1) *Srutya*, (2) *Grihya* and (3) *Dharma*. The *Srutya* describes the *Yagmas* mentioned in the Vedas. The *Kalpa* or *Grihya* describes the domestic duties, and the *Dharma* pointed out religious, political, ethical and general moral duties.

Nirukta is the explanatory commentary on the Vedas :— the *Vyakarana* is their grammar, and the *Jyotisha* is astrology and astronomy which were always required to perform the different Vedic ceremonies. *Siksha* and *Chhanda* explained the different metres, music &c. of the Vedic Hymns.

We have seen that many things, required in the performance of the Vedic *Yagnas*, became in the course of time things of very much sanctity,—nay some of them were worshipped as Gods and Goddesses. * When such was the case with the inanimate sacrificial things, it is no wonder that Vedic Hymns or *Mantras*, the real import of which the latter day Aryans hardly ever understood,—but the solemnity and grandeur of which they felt in their hearts of heart,—the grand music of which stirred them to ecstasy and sent a sort of delirious sensation through their veins, should be considered by them as some thing higher,—something grander,—some thing more gloriously divine than any thing else in the world. Thus did the holy *Mantras* become great Gods with great divine powers.

* When these works were written, it is evident the Vedic language had become obsolete at that time,—nay quite difficult to be understood. It is quite natural therefore that their real import was misunderstood,—if not by all,—at least by many. To them the Vedic Hymns became something very sacred and matter of great sanctity,—the mere words became some thing very divine. In course of time, the Hymns or parts of the Hymns which are called *Mantras* became as living Gods.

We have already pointed out that in later day Vedic Ritualism, the *altar* on which the *Yagnas* were performed, the woods by striking which the Sacrificial fire was kindled and other things required in Sacrifices rose to the position of Gods and Goddesses. They were worshipped with all solemn ceremony. Some of these sacrificial things came to be described in the Puranas as regular beings with many stories attached to them,—the story of Pururava being an instance.

The following will give an idea of the *Mantras*. *-- Satwakama, belonging to the family of Siva, thus questioned the Rishi Pippalpada.

"The high-souled one,—what state one conquers who meditates on the *Omkara Mantra* only till his death?"

Pippalpada replied :—‘ O Satyakama, this *Omkara Mantra* is both *para* and *apara* + Brahman. Therefore he who knows it as *para* or *apara*, he attains *para* or *apara* Brahman.

If one meditates on only one part of the *Omkara Mantra*, i.e. only on A of it, then he acquires knowledge and goes to the world of Gods. The *Ring Mantras* † take him to the world of men. When he becomes endowed with asceticism and meditation and faith, he feels the glory of Brahman.

And if he meditates on the two parts of the *Omkara Mantra* i.e. A and U, he goes to the unseen kingdom. || Thence he was raised to *Somaloka* by *Yayus*. § Here he feels the glory of Brahman and then returns here.

* This is a quotation from the Chhandogya Upanishad.

+ *Para Brahman* is *Nirguna* or attributeless Brahman and *Apara* Brahman is the Brahman with attributes. *Apara* is *Saguna* Brahman.

† We shall ask our readers to take special note of this word. Here *Ring Mantra* is mentioned. We shall find later on that all the *Tantrika* mantras are based on it.

‡ The word is *Mano-loka*,—it has been explained by *antariksha* which means Space.

Somaloka is the abode of the Moon.

§ *Yayus* here refer to the *Mantras* of the *Yayur Veda*.

And he who meditates on the three parts of the *Omkara*, i. e. A, U and M, on the GREAT-PURUSHA, he goes to the brilliant abode of Surja (Sun). As the snake is released from his old skin, so is he released from all his sins and is taken to the abode of Brahman by *Sama Mantras*. * Then sees he the great Soul,—the great Purusha, the Eternal—Infinite, in his this human soul. There are two Slokas on this subject.— They are as follows :—

“The three parts or letters A, U and M of the OMKARA, if meditated upon separately,—cannot make man to transcend death,—but these three letters are attached to one another, and they are used as the name of Brahman (applied fully as regards external, internal and middle affairs,—then the man of knowledge is not moved in any thing.

He acquires the world by *Ring Mantra* ; he acquires the abode of space by *Yayus Mantra* and the abode of Brahman,—the abode that is pointed out by the learned,—by the *Sama Mantras*.

The learned men obtain by the help of *Omkara* that Great One, who is calm, who has no deterioration, no death, no fear.”

This Vedic OMKARA is the greatest of all the Vedic *Mantras*, and it can safely be called the mother of all the Vedic *Mantras* and it can also safely be called the mother of all the *Mantras* of all the Hindu worships.

* Here *Mantras* of the Sama Veda are distinctly mentioned.

We quote below a few passages from the *Mandukya Upanishad* attached to the Atharva Veda.

“OM,—this word is the whole Universe.—The future,—the present,—the past,—all is OMKARA. That which is beyond these three *times*,—namely Brahman, is also this OMAKARA.

All this is Brahman. The soul and the Brahman are not distinct. This Soul has four *parts*.

He who cannot be described and named by any word or letter,—who has no parts,—who is beyond all illusions, but not separate from them,—who is beneficial,—that indescribable One, is the Soul of the Soul, the great Soul. He it is who is *Omakara*. He who can know this *Omkara* sees himself in Himself”.

Thus it comes to this that this OMAKARA is the great God. To utter OMKARA is to utter the name of God. To meditate upon OMKARA is to meditate upon Him.

Thus did *Omkara* become the greatest Vedic MANTRA, and other *Mantras* and Hymns were also raised to this high position. Therefore *Mantras* are not mere words,—meaningless and senseless.—*Mantras* are but Emblems, the invisible, but visible Names of the Great-Unknowable-Known. To utter them with devotion and faith is to utter the holy names of God;—to meditate upon them is to meditate upon God.

We again quote a passage from the *Mandukya Upanishad*. *

* First Munduka, second Kanda.

"This is true. The religious works that were seen by the Rishis in the *Mantras* are divided into various branches in the *Treta*. *

O truth loving men, always perform them. To obtain the great Place, this is your way. .

The following are the seven names of the tongues of Fire.

• Kali, Karali, Managava, Sulohita, Sudhumrabarna, Shulingini and Diptamati, Vaswarupi. +

When these tongues of Fire flash forth,—then if oblations are passed on them in the performance of *Āgnyas*, that man who passes it is carried on the rays of the sun to the place where dwells the only Lord of the Gods."

• Thus do we find that the Vedic *Mantras*,—especially some selected few, such as OMKARA and GAYATRI, were considered by the Aryans of the Brahmanas as great Emblems of the Unknowable Great One, and when this was simplified by the worshippers of Siva and Vishnu by simple "*Nama Sivaya*,—*Nama Vishnuaya*" (Salutation to Siva,—Salutation to Vishnu), the Vedic *Mantras*, like the Vedic animal sacrifices, were pushed aside,—but there were men who could

* *Treta* is the second age,—the first is *Satya*, the second is *Treta*, the third is *Dapara* and the last is *Kali*.

+ Our readers will find from this Vedic passage how the worship of Sakti originated from this. Fire is Siva, the tongues of the fire are its FORCES; we get the very names of Sakti of the Puranas and Tantras here in the Upanishad.

give up neither the one, nor the other. They preserved Vedic animal sacrifices in their worship in another name ;—they also kept the Vedic *Mantras* in another garb: These worshippers soon came to be known by the name of *Tantrikas*, the worshippers of Sakti.

CHAPTER VI.

The Vedic Mantras in the Puranas.

We need not say that as time rolls on,—Religion like other matters gathers round it many things which were never intended for it. Many things deteriorate,—many things change,—many alterations, and additions take place. So was the case with the Hindu Religion. The worshippers of Sakti stuck to the Vedic animal sacrifices as well as Vedic *Mantras*,—but they could not be as they originally were. They passed through many changes, and at the present day it has become almost impossible to trace their original Vedic source. *

We shall now give our readers some idea of the *Tantrika Mantras*.

We shall first give here the translation of an extract from the Agni Purana, chap. 219.

"One's desire is fulfilled, if he recites *Gayatri* by *Pranayama* at the time of Homa or when bathing in water. † If one eats only at night and recites ten

* We have perhaps been able to trace its source to the sacred Vedas.

† *Gayatri* is a verse of a Rigveda Hymn,—now considered most sacred. *Pranayama* is a process of Yoga. It has been ready explained.

thousand *Gavatri*,—all his sins are destroyed, and if he eats one vegetable diet and recites a lac of *Gavatri*, he obtains *Moksha*.

Pranaba Om is Para Brahman. If it is silently recited, then all the sins are destroyed. He who stands in the water till it reaches his navel and recites *Omkara* one hundred times, all his sins are destroyed.

Those, that desire to obtain intelligence and memory, should recite the Mantras of the Rik—*Sadasuvam*.

If *Sunahshefamrishag*, this Rik Mantra is recited, daily, then one's bonds of births are destroyed. He who desires to have daily pleasures, intelligence, knowledge, freedom from diseases, and wealth, he should recite the Sacred Riks such as *Indrasya* &c.

If *Hiranyastupang*, this Rik is recited,—then enemies are destroyed. If *Jatapanta* Rik is recited, then there will be no danger in one's journey. If six Roudri Riks are daily recited, then one gets Supreme Peace.

If *Biprantadwisastang*, this Rik is recited for some nights, then the man who wants to do you harm will be stopped. He who wants to be cured of his disease should recite the Rik *Praskanastattamang*.

If at noon *Uttamastasya*, this half Rik and *Udavatayaynraksha Jang Tejang*, this complete Rik are recited, then many *Asanas* of the Yoga process are

Homa is the Sacrificial fire on which libations of ghee are made.

secured. If at the sunset the Rik *Nabayascha* is recited, then there remains no danger from any enemy. If *Ēkadasa Suparnaswā* is recited, then one's all desires are fulfilled. If *Adhyatmikikoḥ* is recited, then the final Emancipation is obtained. He who recites the Rik *Twang Sōma* when the moon first rises in the sky, gets the clothes he desires to have.

One meets with success when desiring long life, if he recites the Riks *Imang* &c. All the sins are destroyed if at midday are recited the Riks *Apa noh Sosuchat*. If one recites the *Jativedasa* when on the way, he meets no danger and safely reaches home. If *Byustayang* is recited at night, there will be no bad dreams. If the pregnant woman recites at the time of her pregnancy the Rik *Bamandin* &c., she easily gives birth to the child. All sins are removed if after ablution *Japamin-drang* and *Vaiswadevang* are recited. If the Rik *Manas-taka* is recited for three nights after due purification, then one will not meet with untimely death and he will never be attacked with any disease.

If one worships the Sun thrice daily with the Rik *Chitrang* &c., he becomes unconquerable. He who recites in the morning and at midday the Rik *Atha Sapna*, obtains great wealth,—he does not dream any bad dreams and he gets plenty of food to eat. If *Uva Paman* Rik is recited, then one would have no danger from the Rakshashas. If *Uva Vasa* is recited, one's desire is fulfilled. If *Kaya Siva* is recited, it makes one much respected amongst his caste people. If the Rik *Pitarang* is recited, daily wealth is obtained. If *Homa*

is performed with the libation of Ghee and the Rik *Sustakang* is recited, then one is blessed with a heroic son. If *Kankotona* is recited, then one becomes immune of all sorts of poisons. If *Gunanang* is recited, one gets great energy. If one meets an enemy in the way, he should recite twenty-seven times the Rik *Kuvidanga*, and there will be no danger then. If Homa is performed with the recitation of the Rik *Krivnaswa*, then all the enemies are killed.

In cultivating lands,—the following five Riks are recited in due form,—“*Swani Swaha, Indraya Swaha, Marudhya Swaha, Vagaya Swaha*,—then there will be plenty of crops.

If Fire is worshipped with the Riks *Sumudrat* and *Vishvanarah*, then Fire will fulfil all his desires. If Fire is adored by the Rik *Ogna Tuang*, immense wealth, perpetual success, and great riches are obtained. If *Swastipanta* Rik is recited, then one can travel without any fear of danger. By the recitation of the Rik *Vrgigisurvanaspata*, the barrenness of woman is removed. If you desire to get rains, recite the Mantra *Achavada* in wet cloth, without taking any food. Those that desire to possess beasts should recite *Mansab kama*. Those that desire children should recite *Kerdamana* after proper purification and bathing. Those, who desire to possess a kingdom, should recite the Mantra *Ashvapurva*. *

* Perhaps we need not say that all these *Rikas* or *Mantras* are parts of the sacred Rik Veda Hymns.

If one recites the Rik *Jakachaushma*, he obtains long life. If one falls into great distress,—if he is in the point of being slain or to be put to prison, he should recite *Amoraha*. This will save him. If one remains fasting for three nights and offers hundred oblations to the great God by reciting the *Mantra Trambaka*, he lives full hundred years in great happiness. He who worships the sun after bathing with *Tachakshu*, he too is blessed with long life. By the recitation of *Indrasomaya*, enemies are destroyed.

If *Aditwaya* Rik is recited, one becomes victorious in quarrels. If *Mahati* Rik is recited, then great fears are removed. One gets well of his disease, if one recites *Vachang Maki* and *Sauna Vada*.

The whole Universe comes under one's control, if *Jadatya kabyatyudeta* is recited. By the recitation of *Jadvaka*, learning and eloquence are obtained. If *Vachovedameti* is recited, one obtains great purity. In order to escape from the sins, recite the Rik *Apohista*, sitting in water.

If at the rising of the sun, the Rik *Maprogama* is recited, then one becomes victorious in gambling. If one learns that his dear one is short-lived,—then the Rik *Jattahang* should be recited over his head for one hundred times, and one thousand Grita Homas should be performed with the *Mantra Idang Madha*. Then that dear one will be long-lived. If in order to get beasts, one recites *Vaya Saparnang* in the field and in order to get wealth he recites it in the city, his desires are fulfilled.

By the recitation of *Vrihaspata Atita*, rains are obtained ; by *Sarbatrati*, great peace is gained ; by *Suta-sankasyapang*,—good children are obtained ; by *Ahang Rudra*, one becomes an eloquent speaker. If at night time *Ratati* is recited, then there will be no rebirths. If you meet with danger from fire, recite *Anke Agnajaniti* ;—and if you meet with any danger in a forest,—recite *Atanyani* and you will immediately be out of danger. Those who desire victory in war, should recite *Masarâ-patongna*. If *Brahmanagni Sambidanang* is recited, there will be no pains from misery and it will save you from the fear of death. If *Apahi* is recited in purity, there will be no bad dreams ; if *Janadang* is recited, one obtains excellent *Samadhi*. If you desire the prosperity of your kine, recite *Mayocurvata*. If *Sambaring* or *Indrajalang* is recited, then Maya (illusion) is destroyed". *

Let us now see what the Puranas say about the Atharva Veda. †

"If men perform the *Homa* to *Santatigas*, they obtain peace. If they perform the *Homa* of the *Vaisajyas*, they are freed from all diseases. If they perform the *Homa* of *Trisaptayas*, their all sins are destroyed. If they perform the *Homa* of the *Akayas*, they become

* Lest our readers might think that we are not placing before them every thing as regards the Sastras, we have quoted the passage on *Mantras* in extenso.

† This is also from the Agni Purana. The other Puranas write in the same strain.

free from all fears. If the Homa of *Ayashwas* is performed, it prevents accidental deaths.

The Homa of *Sastayanas* brings all good ; Homa of *Sarma Barmas* bestows success. Homa of *Vastaspatyas* prevents all dangers from homesteads, and the Homa of the *Roudras* destroys all faults and dangers.

In *Astadasha* (eighteen) *Santis*, these Homas are to be performed.

The eighteen *Santis* are:—

Vaisnavi, Aiudri, Brahmi, Roudri, Vayubya. Kou-
varj, Vargavi, Prajapatya, Twestin, Koumari. Vauhi-
devata, Marudgava, Gaudhari, Nairitiki, Angirashi,
Jamyā, and Prithivi.

They are described as the givers of all desires.

If *Jasthang Maritu* is recited, then one obtains immortality. By the recitation of *Supamasta*, there comes no danger from snakes. By *Indrama Datevang*, all obstacles are removed and all desires are fulfilled. By *Imadevi*, all harms are prevented ; by *Jamashya Lokat*, all bad dreams are not seen. By *Indrashya Pancha banija*,—great profit is made in merchandise. By *Kamoma Vaji*,—the fortune of women is highly increased. By *Alokta Jiva* great success is met with in cultivation ; by *Ahanta Vagna*, great fortune is obtained ; by *Jam Chala Deshanchaina*, women become pregnant, and so forth. We need not quote further.

The Puranas say :—"In all the Vedas there are

injunctions for the recitation of Mantras and performance of Homa to SREE. *

Hiranyavarni, *Harivi* and other fifteen Mantras of the Rig Veda are addressed to SREE.

Rateswakshusu Raja or four Mantras of the Yayur Veda are also addressed to SREE.

Srabantiyang and *Sama*, these two Mantras of the Sama Veda are addressed to SREE.

Sriyang Dataormayi Dhiya, is the one Mantra of the Atharva Veda addressed to SREE.

* *Sree* generally refers to the Goddess of Wealth, *Lakshmi*,—but often times *Sree* is but another name of the great *Śakti*. Therefore it is evident that in the above quoted Vedic *Mantras*,—the *Śakti* worship is fully based. We hope we have proved without the fear of being contradicted that the latter day *Sakti* worship is but a mere development of the Vedic religion.

CHAPTER IX.

The Tantrika Mantras.

We shall now give some idea of the Tantrika Mantras.

“Know that all *Mantras* with vowel letter *A* &c. added with letter *Ka* and having reference to the name of Tripura are those of Tripura Devi.

Hri,—is the seed of Mantras, — the mental recitation of this Mantra for twenty six hundred times is called *Panascharana*.

The Mantra of Chandika, Saraswati, Gouri and Durga is *Ang Ring*. *

The Mantra of Surja Deva (Sun) is *Kshoi Kroun*.

The Mantra of Lakshmi Devi is *Ang Sring*.

The Mantra of Siva is *Aung Hom*.

The Mantra of Gonesha is *Aung Goung*.

The Mantra of Hari is *Ang*. †

* We have already seen that *Ring* is but the another form of the Great Vedic Mantra *Omkara*. It is quite evident, all the Tantric Mantras are based on the Vedic ~~ॐ~~—*King*.

† At the first sight these Mantras appear to be meaningless jargons, — foolish and laughable. but if they are known to be as the mere *Emblems of God*, we do not think they will then appear so much ridiculous. If one, instead of calling his Supreme Father by the name of God, Allah, Ham &c., he calls him by the name *Ring*, *Hring* and so forth, where is the harm ?

The Agni Purana writes :—If the Mantra *Ang Hring Ong nono Kamaya* is recited, one can subjugate the whole Universe.

Ong Hring Chamunda is the Mantra that makes one gain Chamunda.

This is the Mantra, called *Trailakshya Vijaya*, that which makes one conquer the whole Universe. Its colour is said to be blue,—it stands on the ghost and it had twenty arms. It should be worshipped with Homa &c. We give below some instances of Tantrika Mantras. We need not translate them.

Ong Hring Kshang Hring Om Nama Vagavati Daustmini Vima Vaktra Mahagarupa Hili Hili Raktanetra.—

Kili Kili Maha Meshawana Kulu Om Vidyutjvara Kulu Om nirmangsa Kat Kat Gonasavorana Chili Chili Sabamaladharini Drabaya—

Om Maharoudri Sarda Charuna Kritachhada Vijimvra Om Nritya Asilotadharini Vrikuti, Kritapanga Visarna netra Kritanana.—

Vasamedaviliptagatra, Kaha, Kaha Om Hasa Hasa Krudha Krudha, Om Shiljmutvarna at Vramala-kritavarna Visjura Om Ghoutarobabkirna deha Om Singisistha Arunavarna—

Om Hrang Hring Hring Rohdrarupa Hring Hring Kling Om Hring Hring, Om Akarsa Om Dhun Dhun Om Ha ha Kha Vajrini

We need not further quote this fearful soul-stirring

hair-splitting *Adoration*. Those that understand Sanskrit will find that it is but a description of *Sakti* in her fearful and terrible *form* with some 'emblemical' letters and words, whose real import it is hard to give. *

Such are the Mantras with which Tantrikas worship their great Goddess, but the mere mechanical recitation of these Mantras are never meant.

Japa of these Mantras are not exactly *recitation*, mental and verbal. What is *Japa* then?

It is *Recitation* when one can come to certain mental state by practising some Yoga processes. This is what the Tantras say.

"I shall now describe to you *Nari Chakra*. Underneath the navel there is the trunk; from that trunk innumerable sprouts come forth. Their number is twenty two thousands. They all rise from the navel

* We can easily understand the import of all the Vedic Mantras. The real Pauranic Mantras consist mainly of "*Nama*" such and such a one, with simple and beautiful *adorations* that every body can understand. But such is not the case with the Tantrik Mantras. They consist of some words and letters hardly having, outwardly at least, any meaning whatsoever. We shall make an attempt in our humble way to understand them later on if possible. In the meantime we shall ask our readers to compare the following three *Adorations*.

(1) The Rig Vedic Hymn, beginning with *Hiranya Varani Havani*.

(2) The adorations in the Chandi of the Markendya Purana.

(3) The Tantrika adoration quoted above.

and go upwards, downwards and crosswise. They all exist as if in a circle.

Out of these innumerable *Naris* (nerves), ten are chief. They are called *Ira*, *Pingala*, *Sasumna*, *Gandhari*, *Hasthiginva*, *Pritha*, *Josha*, *Alambusa*, *Huhu* and *Sankini*. They are described as the *Pranas* (vital breaths). These vital breaths are of the ten kinds, namely *Prana*, *Apana*, *Samana*, *Udana*, *Vyava*, *Naga*, *Kurma*, *Krikara*, *Devadatta*, and *Dhananjaya*.

Amongst these, *Prana* (vital breath) is the chief and the first. It always keeps the vital breath full and going. Because this keeps life alive by breaths,—by exhaling and inhaling,—it is called *Prana*.

There is another vital breath in the body which drives out the rejected portions of the food,—and therefore it is called *Apana*.

The vital breath that carries the different constituents of the body such as phlegm, bile &c,—all in equal proportions, is therefore called *Samana*.

The vital breath that excites different motions in the body is called *Udanti*.

That which creates the body and also the diseases is *Vyana*.

That which makes one yawn is called *Naga* and that opens the mouth is called *Karma*. *Krikara* completes the work of eating; and *Devadutta* that of yawning. That which exists in the matter is called *Dhananjaya*. This vital breath does not leave the body, even when death occurs.

By the help of this *Dhananjaya*, the beings travel over these ten kinds of *Narichakraṣ* (nerve circles). These ten nerve circles are,—(1) *Satikranti* (2) *Viśubā*, (3) *Dina* (4) *Ratri*, (5) *Uttarayana* (6) *Dakṣinayana*, (7) *Adhimarsha*, (8) *Rina*, (9) *Una* and *Dhana*.

Amongst them, the hiccups are called *Una*, yawning is called *Adhimarsha*, coughing is called *Rina*, breathing is *Dhana*, the middle part is *Viśubā*, the right side is *Uttara*, the left side is called *Dakṣina*. In the middle part of the body exists *Sasumna*; in the left side *Iri*; on the right side *Pingala* and on the top is *Prana*. This *Prana* is called *Dina*, and *Apana* is called *Ratri*. Thus one vital breath is divided into ten different forms.

To control these vital breaths is called *Pranayama*. To draw breath into the body by *Pranayama* is called *Puraka*. To stop breathing completely is called *Kumbhaka*. Then the men, learned in the *Mantras*, should attempt to raise up all the vital breaths upwards. By this the Siva or the great Soul that exists in one's body Himself becomes manifest. The man of True Knowledge calls this as the *Japa*.

Thus should all the *Mantras* be recited when a man will come to this state. This is *Mantrajapa*. †

The Yoga of Patanjali was not exactly followed by the Tantrikas. Their *Sadhana* is different, though the object is the same,—to obtain final Moksha. The Yoga processes bestow upon man supernatural powers,—so is the case with the Tantrika *Sadhana*.

† All this will be elaborately dealt with later on. We shall

But the object of *Tantrika Sadhanas* is not only *Moksha*,—Emanicipation,—it gave more attention to wordly powers than any other system of the Hindu Religion. We have said that its origin was Atharva Veda which mainly dealt with secular advantages,—such as freedom from diseases, chastisement of enemies, curing of diseases &c. The Tantrika system elaborated upon it. We shall speak more about it, when we shall deal with the Tantrika Sadhana. We shall here give some more examples of Tantrika Mantras.

We quote from the Sastras :—‘I shall now describe to you *Sthamvana* (to make man or woman complete slaves), *Mohana* (enchantment), *Basikarana* (to bring another under one’s complete control,) *Ved-zveshana* (to make difference) *Uchatana* (to make full of unrest) curing of poisons, *Marana* (to Kill) and *Santi* (peace).

Draw a porpoise on a *Vurja* leaf and utter *Mantras* in his mouth and on four legs ; write *Krinkara* on the four legs, *Hrinkara* in the mouth, *Vidya* in the belly and *Sadhaka* on the back, and put it on a piece of stone by encircling it with *Mula Mantra*. You shall then worship it and stamp your foot seven times on the ground. By this your enemy will be made completely powerless.

Recite the Mantra *Om Mala Mukha Sthamvani*

make an humble attempt to describe Tantrika occultism in full,—but how far we shall be successful, we do not know.

Kamarupa Fat, and write the *Aghora Mātra* and the enemies will be powerless in the battle. •

If you put a mark on your forehead with the Mantra *Om namo Vagavatyai*,—you can enchant the whole world.

If you put such a mark with the Mantra *Om Fan Hung Fat*, you can enchant a king.

If you worship in a cremation ground with such Mantras as *Om Navagrahaya Sarva Satrun Om Kunjari Brahmani* &c., and if your enemy's name is written, on a *Varja* leaf he is sure to be killed.

"*String Hun fat*,—this Mantra destroys all sorts of poisons. If a man is bitten by a greatly poisonous snake, utter over him the Mantra, *Om Kshachappa*.

If you recite the Mantra *Om Hung Kaksha*, all your sins will be destroyed.

By the Mantra *Khachha*, all dangers will be removed.

By the Mantra *Kha String Kha cha*,—women will come under your complete control. •

We conclude by quoting two or three other Mantras on this subject, as we find them in the original.

Om Satrumukha Sthamvani Kancarupa Alirakasi.

*Hring feng fatkarini mama Satrunang Deva
dathanang muksha Sthamvaya,
Sthamohaya.*

*Sthamvanang Kuru, Kuru Om Hring feng-
fetkarini Swaha.*

Let us have another for the destruction of our enemies.

Om^{*} Kunjari l rahmani,
 Om Manjari Maheswari,
 Om Vitali Koumari,
 Om Kali Vaisnavi,
 Om Aghora Vairabi,
 Om Netali Rudrani,
 Om Urvashi Chamunda,
 Om Jayani Jakshini Cha,
 Nomiomataro Ha mama Satrunga
 Grinhata, Grinhata.

Let us have another.

Aing Hring Sring Sphang Kaing Khoing Vagavati
 Ambika Kubjing Sphang, Om Bhang Iang Vasa namo,
 Aghormukhi Brang Bring Kili Kili Bichcha Sphoing
 Hrang Sphring Sroing Hring Aing Srimiti Kuvjikavidya
 Sarnakara Smrita.

* We have given sufficient idea of these *Mantras*. We shall try to find out whether they are hair-splitting,—terror-making jargons,—or they have really any meaning or object. This much is admitted that Tantrikism became in course of time a very terrible and fearful thing. On the one hand it rose to the highest point of spiritual culture, on the other hand it became a terrible instrument of evil.

CHAPTER X.

Tantras.

The Sastras of the Sakti-worship are the *Tantras*,—and from them Sakti-worship has derived its name as *Tantrikism*.

But there are *Tantras* and *Tantras*,—they are good, bad, indifferent, and they are of various sorts, both in Hinduism as well as in Buddhism. There are *Tantras* not only in India, but in Nepal, in Thibet, in Mongolia, in China and in other countries. * But all of them are not bad. To give an idea of what they really are, we give a translation from one of them. It is really grand and beautiful.

“Decorated with various gems, ornamented with diverse trees, creepers, plants and shrubs, resounded with the sweet notes of innumerable birds,—perfumed with the fragrance of flowers of all the seasons, beautiful and grand, fanned by the fragrant soft breeze, sweetened by the celestial songs and music of the beautiful *Apsaras*, covered by the cool shades of the trees that do not shake their beautiful green leaves,—echoed and

* Many *Tantras*, both Hinduistic and Buddhistic, are openly bad ; but we have nothing to do with them. Our purpose is to place before our readers what constitutes real and true *Tantrikism*. We have nothing to do with accretions or degradations.

re-echoed by the resounding notes of the maddened *Kukilusa*,—served always by the beautiful Spring with her such companions as black bees,—such is the king of mountains,—the snowy and majestic *Kailasha*, on which sits the Preceptor of all the Universe, the Ocean of kindness, as white as the camphor and the *Kunda* flower, endowed with the pure *Satwa* attribute, Expansive One, clothed in the cloth which is Space, the Lord of the poor and the indigent, the greatest and the best of *Yogers*, decorated with beautiful matted lock, wetted by the sparkling water of the holy Ganges, adorned with ashes, ever steady and of controlled mind, covered with garlands of snakes,—the Lord of the three worlds,—the Holder of the Trident, the Ever-pleased One, the Omniscient, the Bestower of Nirvana, He who has no changes, the Fearless, the Infinite, the Beneficial of all, the God of all Gods, the ever satisfied, ever merry Siva.

On seeing him, the ever submissive Parvati (Sakti) spoke to him thus for the good of all beings, "O God of all Gods, the Lord of the Universe, the Ocean of mercy, I am always thy obidcent half.—O Lord of Gods, I am always at thy command. Without thy permission I can not say any thing. I know thou art always kind to me. I know that thou lovest me much, therefore what has occurred in my mind, I desire to speak to thee. O great God, who is there in these three worlds that can reply to my queries! Thou art omniscient and thou art learned in all the Sastras."

Siva replied:—"O Vastly learned One, O my very darling wife,—please tell me what thou desirest to know. What I shall not speak to my beloved sons Gonesha and Kartikeya,—if it is very secret, I shall speak to thee. But what is there secret to thee in the three worlds! O Goddess, thou art but a form of mine, I have absolutely no difference with thee. Thou art omniscient,—what is there unknown to thee! Then why art thou speaking like one as if thou knowest nothing."

Having thus been very much gratified with the words of Siva, Pravati thus spoke in all humility.

"O Lord, O God of all beings, O learned One in all Dharmas, thou art endowed with the six wealths,—thou art kind, thou knowest the hearts of all,—by thee in ancient time the four Vedas were promulgated. By these holy Vedas,—all the Dharmas increased and people trod on the path of virtue. By the performance of the rites, rituals and *Yagnas* as promulgated in these Vedas,—the virtuous in the *Satya* (golden) age, were able to gratify the Devas, and the Pitris. In that Golden Age, men, becoming virtuous and righteous and by *Dhyana* (meditations) *Tapasya* (asceticism) *Daya* (kindness) and *Dana* (gifts) were all self-controlled,—all greatly powerful, strong and truthful. Though they were mortals, yet they were capable of going to heaven and other higher places, and they were all good, virtuous, righteous and truthful. In that age the kings were attached to high truth and

they were always engaged in protecting and supporting their subjects. They considered the wives of others as their own mothers and the sons of others as their own sons. The man of that age considered the wealth of others as mere stones and pebbles. They strictly performed their own Dharma and always trod on the path of righteousness.

In that *Satya* age, there was none who was a liar, who was addicted to vicious conduct, who was a thief, who ever tried to do harm to others and who was wicked and sinful. None was wrathful, avaricious, covetous, boastful and vicious. Every one's heart was highly noble and good and every one was ever happy. *

In that age, the lands were highly fertile, the clouds poured rains at proper seasons, the cows were plentiful of milk and the trees produced immense number of fruits. In that age,—no one met with death. There was no famine,—no disease. All men were healthy and stout and strong,—all were brilliant and highly accomplished, the women were all chaste and greatly devoted to their husband. In that age all men, the Brahmans, the Khatryas, the Vaisyas and the Sudras,—all of them, performing the duties of their respective orders, obtained the highest state.

* This is a translation of the first chapter of the *Maha Nirvana Tantra*. Any one who will take the trouble to read it must admit that the whole chapter is exquisitely beautiful. But we must say that our translation is imperfect. The original is really very grand and beautiful. Therefore every *Tantra* is not bad and despicable.

When the Satya age passed away,—all this was changed. Then in this age (*Treta*) men were not able to obtain what they desired by the performance of the rites and rituals as promulgated in the Vedas. At this time, the very complicated Vedic rites grew to be very expensive and laborious. The men were oppressed with many anxieties and could not afford to perform them. Still they could not abandon them as they were told that great harm would befall them, if they ever ventured to do it. Therefore they were always sad and miserable. *

At this time thou promulgated on the Earth the *Smritis* which explained the Vedas. By them thou didst save the men from misery, bereavement, disease, worry and sin. In this terrible ocean of the world there is none other who is the supporter, the protector, the savior and the benefactor like the father as thou art.

When the next age *Dapara* appeared, the men lost the good deeds promulgated by the *Smritis* and half of their virtues were destroyed,—men were overwhelmed with mental misery and bodily diseases. At that time they were saved by thee who appeared in the persons of Vyasa and others and promulgated the *Sanhita* and *Purana Sastras*.

Then came the *Kali* age, which is Sin personified,—which destroyed all *Dharmas*,—which filled the earth

• Our readers will mark that the *Maha Nirvana Tantra* says here what we have been saying all along. This is undisputedly an historical fact.

with sin and wickedness,—and which spread all sorts of unrighteousness in the world. In this age the Vedas had lost all powers. The *Smritis* were all gone. It has also destroyed the Puranas that contained many histories and that pointed out many ways.

O Lord, when the Puranas and the other Sastras are thus destroyed,—then men will abandon all virtuous acts and good deeds ;—they will be wild and vicious ; they will be mad in intoxicants ; they will be always in sin and vice ; they will be lustful, highly covetous and avaricious ;—they will be very cruel, rude, crafty, dishonest, untruthful ;—they will be short-lived ; ignorant and wicked ;—they will be overwhelmed with diseases ;—they will adopt the conduct of the low ;—they will always be in the company of the low and the mean and themselves will turn to be mean and low ;—they will rob other's wealth ;—they will be ever engaged in the calumny of others ;—they will quarrel with all ; they will have no fear of sin in stealing the wives of others. They will be all poor, miserable, unhappy and diseased. * .

To save men in this *Kali* age, thou hast promulgated the *Tantras*. Thou hast also promulgated the *Nigama* and *Agama* Sastras that bestow both the

* After thus describing the futility of the Vedas, the Smritis, the Puranas in the *Kali* Age,—the Great Goddess goes on to describe the *Tantras*, that are promulgated in this Age to save men.

worldly enjoyments and the Emancipation. * In these *Tantr Sastras*, the *Sadhanas* of Gods and Goddesses with *Mantras* and *Jantras*,—various *Nayanas* which create, protect and destroy the Universe, and *Badhwa*, *Padmasana* and numerous other *Ashanas* have been told. † In them also was spoken of *Pashuvaba*, *Viravaba*, and *Dibhavaba*. Thou hast also described *Savasana*, *Chitarohana*, *Munda Sadhana*, *Lata Sadhana* and innumerable other *Sadhanas*.

* *Agama* and *Nigama* are the two parts of the Vedas. The part that speaks of the ceremonies that secure worldly goods is called *Agama* and that which speaks of the means of eternal Emancipation is called *Nigama*. In the *Tantras*, there are two such parts,—one is *Agama* and the other is *Nigama*.

† *Sadhana* is religious *Practices*. *Mantra* we have already spoken of and shall further explain.

Jantra we shall speak of later on.

Nyasa—is *Pranayama* already explained.

Ashana has also been explained.

The others are various *Tantrika Sadhanas*,—mostly intended to gain supernatural powers in this world. We hope to speak more of them as we proceed. But many of them, we need not mention, will be passed by us in silent contempt for obvious reasons.

CHAPTER XI.

The deterioration of Tantras.

It is evident that in course of time like all others tenets of Hinduism,—this Tantrikism also fell into the deepest depth of degradation. The following quotation from the *Mahanirvana Tantra* clearly indicates it.

The great Goddess said:—"In the *Kali* age, there is no *Pashuvaba* even,—how then it is possible that there should be *Dibhavaba*! The duties of those that have adopted the *Pashuvaba* are that they should support themselves by themselves, procuring fruits, flowers, leaves, water &c. They even in their mind should never think of a woman. Those that are *Dibhavaba* men are fully God-like,—their mind is always pure, holy and noble; they have no desire whatsoever; they consider every body and everything as the same;—they are godly men in every respect. But the men of this *Kali* age is addicted to sin and vice,—their mind is always uncontrollable,—they are greatly fond of sleep and laziness. How could these men be godly!

O lord, thou hast also promulgated the *Pancha Tatva* in which thou hast spoken of *Viravaba*. Thou hast spoken in it of wine, meat, fish, food and female association. But many men of these *Kali* age are avari-

cious and wordly,—they will degrade themselves in this five *Tatwas*,—they will not perform any *Sadhana*. *

These men,—the men that will adopt this *Pancha Tatwa Sadhana*, will fall into deplorable state. They will drink various intoxicants in order to satisfy their sensual pleasures, and thus becoming dead drunk, will lose all their senses of right and wrong. Many of them will turn thieves,—many will have no respect for any woman. On account of excessive drinking, many will be diseased, senseless and idiotic, and they will die accidentally falling into a lake or a hole or from the house-top or from the top of the hills. When they will be thus drunk, some will quarrel with their elders and others ;—some will sit dumb,—some will lie as dead and some will be very talkative. All these men will be extremely vicious, very cruel and wicked and monstrously sinful and bad. O Lord, O Great God, what you have spoken for the good of the people, will produce quite contrary effects. They will do immense harm. Who will practise the *Yoga*? Who will be able to perform the *Nyasas*! Who will recite the *Stotras* (adorations)? Who will perform the *Jantras*? Who will practise *Punascharapa*? O Lord of the Universe, on account of the age in which they will

* This was really the case. Many Tantras solely devoted themselves to describe and elaborate upon this Tantrik *Bira Sadhana* and the result was most deplorable. What happened is above described.

be born, men will be led to be very sinful, vicious and wicked. *

O the Protector of the helpless, O Lord, kindly tell me the means by which the men of the *Kali* age can be saved: Tell me that by which these men can obtain long life, freedom from diseases, strength, courage, energy, intelligence and knowledge,—that by which they can be endowed with mighty prowess,—that by which they, being pure, holy and noble-minded can always engage themselves in doing good to others,—that by which men will become virtuous and righteous and will always respect and worship the Gods and the preceptors, father, mother and other elders and by which they will support their sons and other dependants,—that by which men can attain to the knowledge of Brahman, can be endowed with the knowledge that speaks of Brahman and can always meditate upon Brahman. Kindly tell me all this."

The great Ocean of kindness,—the great beneficial One of the whole Universe, the Great Siva thus replied :—"O Greatly fortunate One, thou art the Benefactress of the whole world,—thou hast asked me a befitting question. This great beneficial question was

This clearly shows that the time came when many great minds tried to cleanse true Tantrikism from all the shameful accretions that came to it. *Maha Nirvana Tantra* is evidently written for this purpose. Therefore we have so extensively quoted from it. This *Tantra* has been translated into English by Raja Ram Monan Roy.

never before asked to me by any body. O beneficial One, thou art blessed, thou knowest what is good for the world. Thou art the real benefactress of all that are born in this *Kali* age. What thou hast said is all true, there is no doubt of it. *

O Great Goddess, thou art learned in the *Dharmas*, thou knowest the present, the past and the future,—thou art omniscient. The words replete with the Dharma of the past, present and future that thou hast spoken are very true,—they are proper and due to thy sense of justice.

O Goddess of the Celestials, in the *Kali* age men, steeped in sin and consequently suffering great misery and devoid of the power of distinguishing between the holy and the unholy, will not get their salvation by the Brahmanas and the other *Srouta* Sastras as mentioned in the holy Vedas. They will not derive any benefit from the *Puranas* and the *Smritis*. O beloved One, I tell thee and I tell thee again and again that in the *Kali* age men have no other way but that of the *Agama* (Tantras). It was I who declared in the *Srutis*, *Smritis*, *Puranas* that in the *Kali* age, the virtuous will worship Gods in the way as mentioned in the *Agama*. Therefore in this age, men have no other path.

In this *Kali* age, the *Mantras* &c. and the *Jantras* bestow success and their results are seen immediately. In this age, the *Mantras* of the Vedas have become powerless like the snakes that have lost their poisons.

* That is, the Tantrika religion has been much deteriorated.

In the Satya and other ages, they could be¹ few results, but in this age they are as if dead.

O darling One, many *Tantras*, containing many legends have been told by me. How men can achieve final Success,—how various *Sadhanas* are to be practised,—these have been told hundreds and hundreds of time. I have spoken of various Gods and Goddesses. As different men are, as they are fit or unfit for certain religious practices, I have prescribed different processes for different men. I have spoken of things that are to be kept secret, and I have also spoken of many *Tantika* performances that need not be kept secret.

I have spoken of the *Vairabas*, the *Vetalas*, the *Vatukas*, the *Nayikas*, and I have also spoken of the followers of Sakti, Siva, Vishnu, Surya and Ganapati. Many sorts of *Mantras*, *Jantras* and various means of attaining Final Success have been also told. * O dear one, whenever by whatever men questions were asked to me, I replied to them according as they would suit them and be beneficial to them. O Parvati, the question that thou hast asked me is suited to the present age. I am always bound by thy great love; asked by thee, I speak to thee the greatest of all secrets of this world.

* This is the best descriptions of the *Tantras* in brief. So the Vedas, Smritis, Puranas and other *Sastras* are not suitable, to the *Kali* age (of course according to the *Tantras*),—so here is it mentioned that every *Tantra* is not suited to every body,—they were told as they found necessary.

CHAPTER XII.

The Tantrika Brahma Worship.

As Saivism, Vaisnavism and other tenets of the Hindu Religion promulgate both the worship of Saguna and Nirguna Brahman, the Tantrikism is no exception. * It also inculcates first the worship of the two different but one Brahman, and then it goes on specially to promulgate the worship of *Sakti*.

This is what the Tantras say:—"If you do good to the world, the God of the world is pleased;—for He is the Soul of the Universe. It exists, resting upon HIM. He is ONE, without a Second, true, infinite, self-manifested ever-complete, and He is *Sat*, *Chit*, and *Ananda* (Existence-Knowledge-Bliss). He has no changes. He has nothing to stand upon. He is beyond every thing,—He is never changed. He is beyond attributes, He is the direct Spectator of all sorts of action good or bad. He is the Soul of every thing,—He is the Lord of all directions. He is omnipresent,—He exists deep in secrecy in all beings. He has no beginning, nor end,—He is free from all the organs of senses, yet all of them get their brilliancy from HIM. He is beyond all beings, He is the cause or the seed

* In the Vedas,—*i. e.*, in the Upanishads, Brahman has been described as *Nirguna* and *Saguna*.

of all the three worlds. He is not to be known by the words or the mind. He is omniscient,—He knows every thing of the Universe, but no one knows Him.

This Universe is under His control. This Universe with movables and immovables rests upon Him. From Him this Universe is manifested in different forms, such as water, air &c. All beings are His existence.

O Great Goddess, that Brahman being the cause,—we are also born. That great God is the cause of all animals. Brahman is engaged in creation, therefore He is known as the Creator. By His wish Vishnu is engaged in the preservation of this Universe, therefore he is known as the Preserver. As willed by Him, I am engaged in destruction, therefore I am known as the Destroyer. Indra and other Devas also are engaged under His command to perform their respective duties,* and thus to rule the Universe, thou art His *Para Prakriti*,—therefore thou art worshipped in all the three worlds. The beings are never free, or independent. The great Soul sitting in them makes them act as He directs.

O Goddess, He by whose command the winds flow,—the sun sends the heat and warmth, the clouds pour down rain at proper times,—the trees are covered with beautiful flowers, He who at the time of universal dissolution destroys the death itself,—He who is the death of death himself,—who is the terror of terror itself,—He is the GREAT ONE known to the Vedanta. *

* We need not say that this description is beautifully poetical.

O the Adored of the Celestials, all Gods and Goddesses are *Tanmayas*, i. e., Brahman himself. From Brahman down to a blade of grass, all are *Tanmayas*, i. e., every thing is Brahman, in Brahman, not apart from Brahman. If that GREAT SOUL is pleased, then is the whole Universe pleased. If any one pleases Him, he pleases whole Universe. When He is worshipped,—every one is pleased.

O Goddess, as if the trunk of a tree is watered, all the branches and leaves and twigs of the tree are pleased,—so if the Parama Brahman is worshipped, then are all the Goddesses and Gods and Immortals are worshipped. O beloved one, as by thy *Puja* (worship), *Archana* (adoration), *Dhyana* (meditation) and *Japa* (repetition of thy *Mantras*) all the Goddesses are pleased, so are pleased all the Gods if the GREAT SOUL is worshipped. As all the rivers, though they know it not, go and fall into the great ocean, so all worships addressed to whoever Gods, they might reach the GREAT ONE. O Sivani, that GREAT ONE, that MASTER MIND bestows upon man that which he desires and with which desire he adores and worships with faith and devotion the different Gods and through that God. *

O beloved one, what more should I tell you about this matter? Know His adoration, worship, meditation are the only means of Salvation. In his *Adoration*

Compare Gita. Srikrishna said exactly this in the Gita.

(*Upasana*), there is required no exertion, no fasting, no giving pains to one's body,—no strict observance of any rules for living and sitting,—no *Mudra*, no *Nyasa*. Faith, devotion, knowledge are all that is required."

The Great Goddess then thus spoke :—"O God of all Gods, thou art the preceptor of the Devas. Thou art the speaker of all Sastras, all *Mantras* and all *Sadhanas*. O Lord, thou hast spoken to me of *Paratpara*, *Parameshwara*, *Parama Brahman* ; tell me now by what *Upasana* the mortal man can worship and adore Him. What is his *Sadhana*, what are His *Mantras*, what is His *Dhyana*, and what is His *Bidhana* ? I am eager to learn all this from thee."

The Great Siva replied :—"O the beloved of my heart,—this Great *Tatwa* (knowledge) is very secret. O Great Goddess, O beneficial one, this *Parama Brahman* is known by *Swarupa Lakshmana* and *Tatastha Lakshmana*. He who is only Existence, who is only *Paramartha* * who is unchangeable and who is beyond the knowledge of words and mind and by whose existence this illusory Universe appears to be true,—is *Parama Brahman*. This is his *Swarupa Lakshmana*—true nature.

Those who do not see any distinction between the friends and the enemies, those that are beyond

* We need not say that by this the *Tantra* means *Nirguna Brahman*.

the influences of contraries, *i. e.* of cold and heat &c, those who have lost the sense of all distinctions, those who have lost the knowledge of the existence of the soul in the body, such Yogees by Samadhi Yogas can know Him. *

He from whom this Universe has been produced,—in whom this Universe will disappear at the final dissolution, that Brahman is his *Tavastha Lakshmana*. †

O Goddess, the same Parama Brahman is known both by the *Swarupa Lakshmana* and *Tatastha Lakshmana*. If He is to be known in *Swarupa Lakshmana*, then there is no necessity for any *Sadhana*s, but if He is to be known in *Tatastha Lakshman*, then there are *Sadhana*s for it. O beloved one, I shall now tell you what it is. ‡

In this *Sadhana*,—I shall first speak to thee the great *Mantra* of the God of all Gods. First recite *Pranava* (1), and add to it *Sachhit* (2); then add the word *Ekaṅg* (one) and then the word *Brahman*. When added together, it will be one *One Sachhidakong Brahman*. This is the greatest of all *Mantras*. It bestows *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kāma*, and *Moksha* (3). To

* This is almost a quotation from the Gita.

† This is the *Saguna Brahman* of the Vedānta.

‡ We have in previous pages described the puja of Siva, *i. e.* *Saguna Brahman*. The *Tantras* inculcates a different sort of Puja. We need not describe it in detail. It is a long complicated Tantrika ritual; we shall give only a portion of it, so that our readers might form some idea of it.

adopt this *Mantra*, one is not required to see auspicious time, day or month. It is always successful,—in it one is not required to follow any prescribed rules.

He who has got this great *Brahma Mantra* as if it were his ear-rings, he only is blessed ; he only is successful, he is a real virtuous man,—he has bathed in all the *Tirthas* ; he is initiated in all the *Yagmas* ; he is learned in all the Sastras and he is placed in all the abodes.

O the adored One of the Universe, those that have taken Brahma Mantra have no necessity of any other *Sadhana*. As soon as one adopts this *Brahma Mantra*, he becomes full of Brahman. O Goddess, he who has attained Brahman, what is there in the three worlds, that is not acquired by him.

* After this follows a long description of this Brahma Sadhana,—with all the Ritualism of Tantrikism minus its gross parts. We need not dilate upon them.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Tantrika Sakti Puja.

The great Goddess, the Mother of the Universe then thus spoke :—

“O great Ocean of clemency and kindness, thou hast declared that as *Brahma sajushya* (Brahma-hood) is attained by the *Brahma Upasana*,—so can man attain Brahman by my *Sadhana*. O Lord, the *Sadhana* of mine by which *Brahma Sajushya* is attained I desire to hear from thee. What is its form and what is its nature? O God of Gods, tell me all this in detail.”

The great Siva was much pleased with the words of the great Goddess and thus replied to her.

“O highly fortunate one, O Goddess, man can attain to Brahmahood by your worship.—I shall tell you all this in detail,—listen to it.

Thou art the GREAT PRAKRITI of PARAMA BRAHMAN,—thou art His SAKTI. All this Universe is produced from thee. O Sivani, thou art THE MOTHER of the Universe. O good one, from *Mahatatatwa* down to an atom, all gross and subtle, movable and immovable things have been produced by thee. All this Universe is under thy command and control.

Thou art the beginning of all the Universe. † We are all produced from thee. *

Thou knowest all things and every thing in this Universe,---but no one knows thee.

Thou art Kali, thou art Tarini, thou art Durga, thou art Soroshi, thou art Vubaneshwari, thou art Dhanavati, thou art Bagala, thou art Vairabi, thou art Chinnamastha, † Thou art Annapurna, thou art Vagdevi (Saraswati the Goddess of knowledge), thou art Lakshami (the Goddess of wealth),---thou art the Embodiment of all forces,---thou art in every God and Goddess.

Thou art subtle, thou art gross, thou art manifest, thou art unmanifest. Thou art with form, although thou hast no forms. No one knows thee. For the desires of the devotees, for the good of the Universe, for the destruction of the Danavas, thou assumest many forms.

To protect the Universe, thou art some times with four arms, some times with two arms, some times with six arms, some times with eight arms, and then thou wieldest various weapons. In all the Tantras, owing to thy these different forms,---various *Mantras*, *Jantras* and *Sadhyaṅgas* are cited.

O Goddess, thou art in the form of every thing. Thou playest with the wheel of the world; thou art the great Mother of all. If thou art pleased, every one is pleased. †

* From this is the story that Sakti is the Mother of Siva.

† We give this long quotation, not only because it is very

In the beginning of all creations, thou existed as *Tama* * which is named Prakriti. Thy that Form is beyond the knowable state of words and mind. + By the DESIRE of the Parama Brahman, all this Universe was produced from thee. From Mahatatatwa down to this great Elemental Earth, every thing is created by thee. The cause of all causes, that Brahman is but the indirect cause. He exists and exists in every thing, He exists, pervading all the Universe. He exists in every thing as Chit, but he has no connection with any thing. He does nothing; He eats not, he walks not. He does not live in any particular thing. He is actionless,—only EXISTENCE. He has no beginning, nor end.

Thou art the greatest of the great, *Maha Yagini*. Resting only on His desire, thou art creating these worlds; thou art protecting it and at last thou art destroying it.

The destroyer of the creation, *Mahakala* is but one of thy forms. This Mahakala destroys every thing at the Universal Dissolution. He does *Kalan* (destroys), therefore he is called *Mahakala*. Thou dost *Kalan* (destroy) this *Mahakala* even, therefore one of thy names is *Adya Parama Kalika*.

beautiful and grand, but to point out to our readers that what we have stated is nothing out of our own imagination.

* *Tama* is translated by Darkness, but it is not darkness at all. See our previous notes.

+ Sankara says, "It is indescribable."

Thou devourest *Kala* (time),—therefore, thou art called *Kali*. Thou art the beginning of every thing, thou art the creator and destroyer of all, therefore thou art called *Adya Sakti*. At the time of Dissolution, thou existest only as formless, as *Tama*, as one indescribable.

Though thou hast form, yet thou art formless. Thou assumest many forms by the help of *Maya*. Thou art the beginning, thou art the endless infinite, thou art the master, thou art the destroyer, thou art the protector. O good one, for this reason, I told thee that those that have attained to Brahman by *Brahma Mantra*, obtains the result as do those that worship thee.

Thus various *Sadhanas* have been told in the various *Tantras*. In them have been told three kinds of *Bhava*, namely *Pashu*, *Dehya*, and *Vira*. In the *Kali Age* there is no *Pashu Bhava*; there is hardly to be found *Dibya Bhava*; in this age *Vira Sadhana* produces immediate results.

O Goddess, without thy *Kulachara Sadhana*, there cannot be final success. By this *Kulachara*, the knowledge of Brahman is obtained. He who has acquired the knowledge of Brahman, has become Emancipated even in his this life. *

O Goddess, I have declared various rites and rituals that should be performed for thy worship according

* We have already given the Pauranic Sakti worship. We shall now give our readers some idea of Tantrika worship.

to the country, place, time and the capacity of the worshipper. If the men who are fit for any of these *Sadhanas* perform them only and in proper form, they obtain the result accordingly, and having thus cleansed of all their sins they will cross the ocean of the world.

By the accumulated virtues of many previous births, men are inclined to thy *Kulachara Sadhana*. He whose heart has become pure by *Kulachara* becomes Siva himself. Where there is preponderance of enjoyments,—there is no chance of Yoga; and where there is Yoga,—there the desire for enjoyments cannot exist. The man engaged in *Kulachara* obtains both enjoyments and Yoga. It is the highest of all *Sadhanas*. If even a Chahdala becomes learned in truth and essence of *Kulatatwa*, he is far superior to a Brahman who is not a *Kulachari*.

—Those that are purified by truth and those that have become self-controlled, perform *Kulachara*, and thus become kind and genteel. Kali will never be able to persecute them.

Those that will always remain engaged in serving his preceptor and father, those that bestow devoted love towards his mother, that ever remain attached to his own wife, *Kali* will not be able to persecute them.

Those that are truthful, that are devoted to truth and are ever attached to true Dharma, those that believe in *Kulachara* as being true, *Kali* will not be able to persecute them.

Those that are free from pride and malice, that are devoted to *Kulachara*, *Kali* will not be able to persecute them.

Those that associate with men who are true *Kulacharis*, those that live near them, and serve and respect them, *Kali* can not persecute them.

Those Devotees of *Kulachara Dharma* who never deviate from it and strictly adhering to it, worship and adore thee, *Kali* cannot persecute them.

Thou art the BEGINNING, thou art the GREAT FORCE. By thy power we are capable of creating, protecting and destroying the worlds. Thy various colours, thy various forms,—all end in the INFINITE FORM by the much arduous *Sadhana*. Who can describe thy forms? By thy kindness, I have said some portion of thy worship and *Sadhana* in the *Agamas* and *Tantras*, but that which I am telling thee now is the GREAT SECRET SADHANA. This *Sadhana* is the destroyer of all pains and miseries, remover of all dangers; there is nothing like it in the three worlds.

CHAPTER XIV.

Mantras Explained.

We have already set out the processes by which the *Mantras* have been created from the earliest Vedas ;— we have also quoted a few Tantrik *Mantras*. At the first sight, these Tantrik *Mantras* look some thing funny and ludicrous,—having absolutely no meaning at all ; but they are as a matter of fact not so funny, nor ludicrous, nor meaningless as they appear to be.

Each one of them has a meaning and a deep meaning attached to it. They are but emblems and were created after the great Vedic *Mantra* OM. *

Mahanirvana Tantra thus explains it ;—“OM has been formed of A, U and M put together. The meaning of A is the Protector of the Universe. U means the Destroyer of the world and M signifies the Creator of the world. This great *Mantra* means Parama Brahman.”

The Tantra says.—“O Goddess, if the above mantra (i.e., OM *Sacchidakong* { *Brahma* }) be uttered without the *Pranaba* (i.e., OM), but with the addition

* OM is known as *Pranaba*. We have fully explained this most sacred word of the Hindus in the previous pages. The *Tantras* have merely imitated the Vedic Rishis and created many other emblematical words as we shall presently see.

of *Aing* which means *Knowledge*, *Hring* which means *Maya*, and *Sring* which is *Lakshmi*, the Goddess of Wealth, the devotee will then obtain various knowledge, various *Maya* (illusions) and various wealth.

Thus do we find, as OM (ॐ) indicates Parama Brahman, so *Aing* (ऐ) indicates knowledge, *Hring* (ह्रीं) indicates *Maya* and *Sring* (स्रीं) indicates the Goddess of Wealth. They are therefore not altogether meaningless as ordinarily they appear to be.

We quote the *Tantra* where it explains these Mantras :—

“O great Goddess of all Goddesses, O Sivani, I shall now describe these *Mantras* and how they are to be made. O beloved one, get the *Bija Mantra* * *Hring* in this way. The great One, the Lord of the heart rests on Matter ; on it stands the Space and thus is created *Hring*.” †

Kring signifies *Prajapati* i.e., God as Creator. Thus the Tantrik Mantra :—

* *Bija* means seed,—therefore *Bija Mantra* means the seed of the Mantra, i.e. it is but the abbreviative term of some thing,—some God or Goddess.

† The above does not perhaps convey any meaning. As OM is created by A, U and M,—so *Hring* (ह्रीं) is made of (ह्र) *Hr* (matter), (ए) *Ee* (God) and (ं) *ing* (space) ; so on with every other such emblematical *Mantra*. We shall, therefore, give only one example, with their different significations.

Hring, Sring, Kring, Paramashwari Swaha is made.

Kring signifies *Kama*,—the *Desire* of Brahman; thus *Kling Paramashwari Swaha* will mean :—"Oblations to the great Goddess who is the *Desire* i. e., *Maya* or *Prakriti*, of Brahman."

Sthring signifies GREAT FEMALE, i. e. *Prakriti*, *Sakti*,—therefore *Sthring Paramashwari Swaha* means :—"Oblations to the great Goddess who is the great Female."

So far we have got the following :—

Om (ओं)=great Brahman.

Aing (ऐं)=Knowledge of Brahman.

Hring (ह्रीं)=*Maya*

Sring (श्रीं)=*Lakshmi*.

Kring (कीं)=*Brahman* as Creator.

Kling (लीं)=*Kama* (*Desire*)

String (स्त्रीं)=*Great Female*.

Here is a complete Mantra formed by these emblematical words.

String Hring Sring Kring Paramashwari Kalika Haing Sring Kling Swaha.

Now we hope every one will be able to understand what this *Mantra* signifies. The emblematical words are but the various names of the Great Goddess.

"Thou art *Om*, Great Brahman, thou art *Aing*,—*Saraswati*, the Goddess of Knowledge,—thou art *Hring* *Maya*—*Prakriti*; thou art *Sring*, the Goddess of wealth; thou art *Kring*, the Great Creator; thou art

Kling, the *Desire* of Brahman ; thou art *Sthring*, the Great Female.

These *Mantras* therefore are not meaningless jargons. But the *Tantras* went much further ;—they went much further in many things, so much so that some of them at least brought religion to the lowest level.

They created abbreviations of every *Mantras*, for example the *Bija* of Eshana (Siva) *Hong* (॥), that of *Vayu* (wind) is *Jong* (॥), that of *Varuna* is *Bong* (॥), that of *Agni* is *Rong* (॥) and that of *Indra* is *Long* (॥)

We have already said, the *Tantras* have created these peculiar sorts of *Mantras* out of every thing. We give below another example and we believe that will be sufficient for our purpose.

It is supposed that some Gods and Goddesses remain at the door of the room in which the Great Goddess is to be worshipped. They are *Gonesha*, *Khetrapala* (the God of the fertile land), *Vatuka*, *Jogini*, *Ganges*, *Jamuna*, *Lakshmi* and *Saraswati*. They are to be worshipped with these *Mantras*.

Gong Gonesha Namo.

Gong (॥) being the *Bija* *Mantra* of *Gonesha*,—salutation to him.

Khong Khetrapala Nam.

Khong (॥) being the *Bija* of *Khetrapala*,—salutation to him.

Bong Vatukaya Namo.

Bong (वं) being the *Bija* of *Vatuka*,—salutation to him.

Jang Joginaya Namō.

Jang (जां) being the *Bija* of *Jagini*,—salutation to her.

Gang Gangaya Namō.

Gang (गां) being the *Bija* of the *Ganges*,—salutation to her.

Jang Jamunaya Namō.

Jang (जां) being the *Bija* of the *Jamuna*,—salutation to her.

Sring Lakmai Namō.

Sring (श्रीं) being the *Bija* of *Lakshmi*,—salutation to her.

Aing Saraswatyai Namō.

Aing (ऐं) being the *Bija* of *Saraswati*,—salutation to her. *

* Why the *Tantras* in the matter of these abbreviations went to such a length, we cannot venture to say. When it was believed that the *Mantras* (then of course Vedic,—specially Rig Vedic) had particular powers by themselves,—when virtually they were raised to be so many Gods and Goddesses,—when it was firmly believed that their mere recitation bestowed on man health, wealth, happiness and hundred other worldly goods,—nay supernatural powers and so forth, it then gradually grew a necessity to shorten them for the convenience of recitation and of keeping them in the mind. We have seen that even so early a date as the days when the Vedic Brahmanas held supreme sway over the Aryan minds,—even then the Rig Vedic *Mantras* were believed to have the power of bestowing on their reciters many

wordly benefits and supernatural powers. Even then the Rig Veda Hymns were cut into short sentences and these *very* short sentences were called *Mantras*.

The *Tantras* went a step further,—a very long step further. They abbreviated their *Mantras* to single letters and called them the *Bija* (seed) *Mantras*. We need not say, they firmly believed that these *Bija Mantras* had the sure and certain power to bestow on man every earthly benefit and great supernatural powers. They went further,—they believed that if these *Mantras* were repeated for certain number of times, say hundred, thousand or hundred thousand times,—they made a man as powerful as any God and so forth. These repetitions are called *Punascharana*.

We believe that Saivism and Vaisnavism that followed the complicated ritualism of the Brahmanas dropped all these *Mantras* and brought in a really devotional religion in India. Their *Mantra* was simply *Namo*—salutation to the, but the *Tantras* followed the path of the Vedic *Mantras* with rather full vengeance.

CHAPTER XV.

Kulachara.

The religion that has been promulgated by the various Tantras has been called by every one of them as *Kulachara*,—the conduct of the *Kulas*. What is it? The *Tantras* of course fully describe it,—though each according to its own tenets and doctrines.

Thus did Parvati ask to Siva :—“O Lord, what is *Kula*? What is also *Kulachara*? And what are signs of *Panchatatwa*?”

Siva replied :—“O Goddess of *Kula*, you are always a well-wisher of all devotees,—thou hast put to me a proper question. I shall now answer them. Please listen to it.

The beings,—*Prakriti* or Nature, Space, Sky, Earth, Water, Heat and Air * are known by the name of *Kulas*. O Goddess,—to understand the existence of Brahman in these things, and to act without the least idea that they and the Great Brahman are not one,—such action,—is called *Kulachara*. And this *Kulachara Dharma* bestows *Dharma*, *Ariha*, *Kama* and *Moksha*. Those men only who have been free from

* By beings *i.e.* soul, space &c., it should be understood that the author of the *Tantra* means the original spiritual and material Elements.

all sin by hard austerity, distribution of alms and meditation, can have their minds attached to *Kulachara*. The understanding of the man who is attached to *Kulachara* soon becomes pure and holy. Then their minds are fully and solely devoted to the Lotus feet of the *Adya Kali* (First Sakti).

The men, having obtained a good *Guru* (preceptor), secure the knowledge of *Mantra*, and they, having been engaged in *Kulachara*, worship the Goddess of *Kula* by *Panchatatwa*. Such men are learned in *Kula*; they are the best of *Sadhakas* (devotees);—they enjoy here in this world all the happiness possible, and after death obtain final Emancipation.

That which is Greatest Remedy for all beings,—that which drives away all feelings of misery from the mind and that which gives immense pleasure,—should be known as the first of the *Five Tatwas*. But that which produces error, confusion of mind and unhappiness and which is the cause of various diseases is always to be carefully avoided.

The domestic, feathery and wild animals,—those that are very nourishing and that give intelligence, energy and power from the bodies of them should be considered as the second *Tatwa*.

O beneficial one, that which is to be obtained from water, which is very palatable and enjoyable and which increases the power of manhood is the third *Tatwa*.

That which is food,—that which is produced from

the land,—that which is in fact the very life of all creatures and that which bestows long life to all of the three worlds should be known as the fourth *Tatwa*.

O Goddess,—that which is the cause of the birth of all creatures, that which is the root of the infinite Universe is the fifth and the last *Tatwa*.

O lotus-eyed one, O beloved Goddess, know that the first *Tatwa* is *Taja* (Heat), the second is *Air*, the third is *Water*, the fourth is the *Earth*. O Lady,—consider the fifth and the last *Tatwa* as *Space* which holds the whole Universe.

O darling Devi, when thou wilt see that the religion of the Vedas and that of the Puranas have disappeared from the earth, then wilt thou know that the *Kali* age has appeared and has become powerful.

O Sivani, when there will be no distinction between virtue and sin as described in the Vedas, know then that the *Kali* has become powerful.

O Lady of Kulā, when the Ganges will be found scattered about,—cut about,—here dried up and there lost in the sand, know then that the *Kali* has become powerful.

O Goddess, when women will be very rough, rude, wild and quarrelsome,—they will always pour abuses on their husbands, know then that the *Kali* has become powerful.

* These grand *Panchatatwas* were symbolised by the *Tantras*—in *Madya* (wine), *Mansa* (meat), *Matsa* (fish), *Mudra* (food) and *Maithuna* (female association). Please see next chapter.

O Lady-beautiful,⁴—when the earth will hardly produce any crops, when the clouds will hardly pour any rains, and the trees will hardly bear any fruits, know then that the *Kali* has become powerful.

O Goddess, when brothers will quarrel with brothers, the relatives will quarrel with relatives, when every one will covet the wealth of the others,—know then that the *Kali* has become powerful.

O mighty one, when there will be no punishment,—no shame in drinking wine and eating meat in public,—when men will drink deep,—know then that the *Kali* has become powerful.

When this *Kali* will be powerful, all the Dharmas will be weak ;—only there will remain TRUTH. Therefore every one should be attached strictly to Truth. There is no better Dharma than Truth. As no crops are produced in a barren land, as it is useless to sow seed on it,—so are useless the Puja, Japa, Tapasya without Truth.

Truth is Parama Brahman. Truth is the great worship of God.—Truth is above all, therefore when the *Kali* will become powerful,—every one should perform *Kulachara* in public,—in broad-day light,—before the eyes of all men.

* We should draw our reader's attention to this sentence. Here the *Tantra* distinctly condemns drinking. We shall see later on that drinking is a part of Tantrika religion,—but this drinking is rather more symbolical than real. We have already said that the Vedic *Soma Yagmas* appeared in Tantrikism in this form.

Nothing can be kept hidden and secret without falsehoods,—therefore *Kulachara* should be performed in public. * Therefore men should make them strictly attached to Truth and perform Puja, Japa, Homa and all other religious ceremonies. I shall now tell you the various processes of the worship which is the only remedy for the fell malady in the shape of Kali." †

* Here it is distinctly mentioned that there was a class of *Tantrikas* who held their *Tantrika Sadhanas* in secrecy,—but it is strongly denounced here. Therefore there is absolutely nothing to be ashamed of in *Tantrika Sadhana*, if that Sadhana is real and true.

† We shall not keep away any thing from our readers,—but we shall only speak as we have repeatedly said, of its true import.

CHAPTER XVI.

Pancha Tatwa.

The Great Siva thus spoke to the Greatest of Great Goddess :—

“O Lady, without *Kulachara*, the *Mantras* addressed to Sakti can not produce any result. Therefore men will have to engage in *Kulachara* and then perform the *Sadhana* of Sakti. O beloved one, in the worship of Sakti, *Pancha Tatwa*, namely *Madya* (wine), *Mansa* (meat), *Matsa* (fish), *Mudra* (food) and *Maithuna* (female association) are required. If Sakti is worshipped without these five *Tatwas*, then such Puja becomes the cause of the worshipper's death. In such Puja, the worshipper derives no benefit,—rather he meets with great danger at every step. As no seed could germinate if sown on stones,—so no benefit can be derived if Sakti is worshipped without the *Pancha Tatwa*.”

* Many will ask,—“And pray, why?” It is very difficult to answer this why ; at least it is beyond our humble capacity,—but this much we can say that many true and real great men and Sadhus have been born amongst the Tantrikas,—therefore we should not ridicule it and make it a thing of contempt. As an historical fact,—it is but the Vedic meat and wine *Yagmas* in another form,—but it is also something more. We must not tread on dangerous grounds. We lay before our readers plain facts,—they may form their own opinion.

The Goddess asked :—"Kindly tell me in detail about *Panchatatwa*."

The great Siva replied :—"The best wine is of three kinds,—namely *Gouri*, *Paishti* and *Madwi*. This wine is made of palm molasses and is of various sorts. Owing to the country in which they are produced and the material from which they are made, these wines are spoken of by various different names. All these wines are fit to be used in the worship of the Goddess. *

This wine in whichever way it is produced and by whomsoever it is brought,—if it is properly purified (by *Mantras*), bestows all success on the worshipper. There is absolutely no distinction in respect of wine, (*i. e.* any wine can be used).

Meat is of three kinds,—those of the land,—those of the sky and those of the water. These meats can be used by whomsoever they are brought or killed. In the offerings offered in the worship,—the wish of the worshipper is only taken into consideration. The things that one loves and of which he is fond should be offered in *Puja*. In sacrificing any animal,—only males are to be sacrificed,—never a female is to be offered.

* In the Vedic Brahmanas, long discourses have been written on the *Soma* wine,—how to gather it, how to press it, how to drink it, so on. Therefore there is nothing new in this.

† This animal Sacrifice is also not a new innovation. It is the animal Yaginas of the Vedas.

The three classes of fish,—namely *Sala*, *Boala* and *Ruhi* are the best. The fishes that have no scale are the next best, and those that have scales are the last if offered with fried rice. *

The *Mudra* or food is also of three kinds,—namely *st*, the medium, and the indifferent. That which is white as the moon-beam, which is prepared with milk-white rice, or wheat or barley prepared with ghee and very palatable should be considered as the best. The other foods and eatables prepared with material of less good quality should be classed as medium or indifferent. †

* We have not come across in the Vedic Brahmanas any offering of fish ; it is undoubtedly a new innovation. Even up to the present day, a high class Hindu never touches, not to speak of, eating, fish in any other part of India except Bengal. Fish-eating is general only in Bengal ;—there it is eaten by the highest to the lowest with the exception of higher class Hindu widows and a few men and women. Therefore it would not be very far from wrong if we say that the *Tantras* must have their origin in Bengal. Even to day they are more extensive here than any other parts of India. We have historical evidences to prove that the religion of the *Tantras* went to northern and eastern Asia,—Tibet, China and other countries from Bengal.

† This preparation of food to be offered to God became a regular Science in the Brahmanas. In them many rules and regulations were promulgated as regards its preparation,—the wood to be used,—how they are to be placed and set fire to and so forth. It was called *Charu*-preparation, and in time *Charu* almost became as sacred as a God. Therefore this *Mudra* of the *Tantras* is not a new innovation at all.

When the Ambrosia (wine) should be offered to the Goddess, all the fruits, meat, fish and eatables offered with it, should be considered as holy and pure. Wine at other time and place is poison. It makes a man a life-long invalid and he will soon meet with death.

When the *Kali* will become powerful, the fifth and the last *Tatwa* should be performed with one's wife only. *

O beloved one, one should make one's all accomplished place *Sripatra*. Then he should initiate that wife with *Karana* (wine, and the water of the *Argha*.) This is the *Mantra* of the initiation.

Aing Kling Swaha ;

then recite,

Tripuraya Namō.

* The worst degradation of the Tantrika religion came about from the first (wine) and the last ;—for they are very dangerous things to meddle with. How and why this last *Tatwa* was introduced to Tantrikism is more than what we can say. It led men to horrible practices,—practices unthinkable in the name of religion. But if bad men do a thing, that is no reason that we shall condemn the religion itself.

In our humble opinion, this innovation can also be traced to the Vedic *Yagmas*. • There, one's wife was a necessity,—no one could perform a *Yagma*, if he was not accompanied by his wife. There were many ceremonies enjoined for the wife. Most probably this Tantric ritual is but some sort of development of the Vedic custom.

Salutation to Tripura (Siva).

Then pointing to the wife he will say,

Imang Sakting.

This is Sakti.

Then recite the following,

Pavitri Kuru.

Make pure.

Sakting Kuru Sivaha.

Make Sakti,—oblation to thee !

If the wife was not initiated before,—then utter in her ears the Maya Mantra *Hring*.

Then draw a triangle between him and his wife and write within it *Hring*. Then draw a six-angled figure round the above-mentioned triangle and then again draw a square round the six-angled figure. * Then the worshipper will adore the four different angles of this square, with the following Mantras.

Pung Purna Sailaya Pitaya Namō.

Salutation to the Purna Sila Pita. †

Ung Uddiyanaya Pitaya Namō.

Salutation to the Uddiyana Pita.

Jang Jalandharaya Pitaya Namō.

Salutation to Jalandhara Pita.

* We should ask our readers to compare this with any of the Vedic Yagmas.

† We have already said what is meant by a *Pita*,—it is a place where some portion of Sakti's body fell when Vishnu cut it into pieces.

Kang Kamrupaya Pitaya Namō.

Salutation to Kamrupa Pita. *

Then the worshipper should adore the six angles of the six-angled figure with the proper Mantras ;—then he should adore and worship *Hring* placed at the centre of the triangle.

The plain idea of all this *Ritualism* is the worshiping of *Prakriti*,—*Hring* is *Maya*, and *Maya* is *Prakriti*. We need not dilate upon it further. *Prakriti* procreates ; the Tantras have made the worshipper's wife the Emblem of that *Prakriti*,—that is all. When he worships his wife,—he worships the Great PRAKRITI,—Great SAKTI. Instead of worshipping and adoring her in an *Emblem*, in an *Image* made of clay, stone or wood,—it is but worshipping Her in another human being ;—whether it is good or bad we do not know, but certainly it was not idolatry.

* These are the four great pilgrimages and the sacred places of the Tantrikas. The Kamuksha Devi of Kamrupa in Assam is famous all over India.

CHAPTER XVII.

Image-Worship Explained.

We shall not describe the long and complicated *Sakti Worship* as promulgated by the Tantras. Perhaps it was very simple in the beginning,—but became in course of time so complicated and so lengthy that it might very well be called fearful. We have no space to describe it from the beginning to end,—for it will cover many pages and will do good to nobody. As in the Siva worship,—so here also it begins with *Pra-takrita* (early ablutions), *Snana*, (bath), *Sandha* (reciting the Gayatri,—(of course the Tantrik Gayatri is different from the Vedic Gayatri)), *Sambhida Sodhana* i. e. the purification of the five *Tatwas*, the external and internal *Nyassa*, *Puja Vidhana*,—the ceremony of worship, *Validana*,—the sacrifices of animals &c., *Homa*,—the fire ceremony,—*Vairaba Tatwa* and *Chakranasthana*.

* It is the performance of *Sakti Puja* by forming a circle. Within this circle there is no caste, no distinction, no enmity,—it is all love and brotherhood. But Tantrikism met its death perhaps from this *Vairabi Chakra*, for men of worst character turned it into a veritable hell. But fortunately it is now dead and gone and is buried in oblivion.

We believe we have now given a sufficient idea of the true and original *Tantrikism*.—In course of time it developed in the hand of many men, and it branched off in various directions. But although it fell from its original standard,—it spread from country to country, over hills and dales, over seas and oceans,—over deserts and mountains till it became the most powerful religion of the Hindus as well as of all the races of the north, such as the Tibetians, the Mongolians, the Chinese, the Korians and the Japanese.

The Tantras thus explain the worship of Sakti in her different clay, stone and wood Images.

The Great Mother of the three worlds, Parvati, thus asked the Great One who is the source of everything. “The producer of the *Mahai Tatwa*, the *Mula Prakriti*, is vastly brilliant, she is more subtile, than the most subtile, she is very hard to be understood,—how there could it be possible to conceive any Form of this *Mahakali*? O Lord, the creations of *Prakriti* (Nature) as trees, plants &c. might have forms, but she who is beyond all beyonds, who is the Great *Prakriti*, how can she have *Forms*? Kindly explain to me this.”

Siva said, “O beloved one, it is repeatedly said that for the adorations of the worshippers, according to their qualifications and actions, many *Forms* of the Goddess are imagined. O Daughter of the Hills, as white, yellow, any other colours are merged in black, so all things and all beings are merged in Kali (Sakti), for

this reason that attributeless and formless Great One, the ever Well-wisher of all the Yogees,—is said to have *black* colour, as the Destroyer's colour is *black*. She is Infinite, She is the Destroyer, the Merger of all things, She is ever existent,—ever beneficial.

The *Moon* has been placed on her forehead to indicate that she sprinkles Ambrosia from her forehead over the whole Universe. She has three eyes,—it indicates that she sees the Universe with the Moon, the Sun and the Fire.

She destroys all creatures, she devours them, she crushes them with her fearful teeth which is death,—therefore it is said that she wears a crimson cloth, indicating that it is covered with blood.

O Goddess, she protects all creatures and she makes them all perform their respective duties, therefore it is imagined that in one hand she dispenses boons and in another she bestows hope and courage. O Good One, She (Sakti) is in the created Universe owing to *Raja* quality, therefore it is said that she sits on a red Lotus. *

She is KNOWLEDGE itself,—she is the WITNESS of all beings and all things,—she is full of MAYA, she is, as if in playful and drunken mood looking at the Universe. For the benefit of those devotees whose

* The *Raja* quality is described as of red colour. See previous notes.

understanding cannot rise to the high-level of *Brahma-jnana*,—various *Forms and Images* of the Great Goddess have been imagined. *

* This is what the Mahanirvana Tantra says.—The other Tantras have explained the various *Forms* of Sakti in different ways. We have already said what we had to say about it in previous pages.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Tantrika Occultism.

The greatest development of occultism was made by the *Tantras* and their followers. The *Yogees* rather kept their eyes shut to all worldly material powers that were acquired in the process of *Yoga*,—but the *Tantrikas* rather desired them,—nay hankered after them.

The Patanjala Yoga Sutras 85 say :—"From this come *Anima* and other powers. They bestow Lordship over matter and over every thing."

It is thus explained. "The *Yogee* acquires eight "successes," such as *Anima*, *Laghima* &c. He can then make himself as light as he desires. He can make himself as large as he wishes. He can make himself as heavy as the earth and as light as the air. He can be the lord and master of every thing and all things and of every body and all bodies whichever he wishes. He can conquer whatever he pleases. By his wishes the lion will sit at his feet. Whatever he will desire will come to pass.

When he will acquire this power, his body will not decay or die ; fire cannot injure it. None and nothing can harm it. If such a man does not desire it, nothing can injure, or harm him or destroy any thing of him."

But as we have said, the Yogees shut their eyes to all this and go on to the acquirement of final Emancipation, which is the complete union with Brahman. But on the other hand, the Tantrikas,—so far as we can find them from their records,—were rather eager to gain these extraordinary powers. Therefore they cultivated the processes more strenuously than any others and were in many cases very successful *

Now what is occultism? We shall try to describe it as briefly as possible.

The occult philosophy demonstrates in man the existence and operation of what is called the seven "principles," by which is meant that man can *consciously* exist in seven different *planes*. Each of these stages, states or planes of *consciousness*,—these *planes of manifestation*,—these aspects of evolution,—is marked by distinct characteristics of its own and acts in accordance with certain laws.

Each of them contributes its quota to the making up of the complicated organism of man. Each of them is necessary to make man what he is, and to build up his constitution.

* Perhaps many of our readers have heard of the stories of Tantrika Powers. Some as a matter of fact could wield immense power over every thing,—in comparison to which hypnotism, mesmerism and spiritualism are but child's play. Perhaps the Tantrikas kept more eye for the acquirements of these powers than any thing else,—they grew so successful in them.

The first and the most obvious *principle* in man is his *physical body* (*Sthula Sarira*). Composed of gross material particles, it serves as the *vehicle* of the *higher principles* of the human life ;—it is the medium,—so to speak,—through which they are enabled to take part in the theatre of life.

This *principle*, namely the human body, has been sufficiently dissected, analysed, and anatomised by the Western Scientists, but so long the functions of the other *principles* are not taken into account, so long there will be yet much to be learnt of the human body. *

There is an exact counterpart of the physical body within the human body ;—it is called the *Suksha Sarira*,—the *astral body*. It is composed also of *matter*, but this matter is not perceptible to our external senses,—matter more subtle and less gross than what we find in the physical body. It is the *vehicle* of the third *principle*,—the bridge, as it were, which separates the physical body and the *Life*. There is a close and intimate relation between it (the astral body) and its physical counterpart. As death occurs,—it separates from the physical body.

Prana (life) is the third principle. It animates the physical man ; it supplies the real vitality and energy to the body. It may be said to be the *aggregate* of the countless *lives* which build the body. A man is dead,

* Even the Western Medical Science admits that it knows very little of the human brain.

his *life* is extinct,—and all the *lives* that were in his body have lost their working capacities.

Next to *Prana* (life) is the *Kamas* (desires) that which incite man to action. They are the *agents* which, by producing changes in our mental life, make the course of existence possible and continuous. This principle (*Kama*) attracts and attaches us to the worldly life,—namely the material plane,—the plane of the world. The withdrawal and eliminations of *Kamas* from the mental plane could mean the utter inactivity,—nay the total extinction of our mental life. This principle *Kama* is the real animal nature, with those lower impulses and desires which are common to man and animal alike. The man, with the constitution he has got, is not able to get himself above the region of matter.

These four *principles*, namely the physical body,—the astral body,—the *Prana* and the *Kama*,—suffer disintegration and decay in process of time. The man, thus constituted, has emotion and desires which, though belonging to the category of lower passions,—suffice to make a living entity. But these require to be *rationalised*,—to make the entity human and a man as distinct from other animals,—and all this is done by the fifth *principle*.

It is the *Mana*,—the mind,—which might be termed the *Thinker*. It is the immortal spiritual entity in man which endures for ever and changes not. It is the real human Ego,—it is beyond the dominion of

matter,—and it is the so-called Spirit. This incarnates again and again and is destined to enter into and pass through separate and successive *personalities* and to continue in its travels through eternity.

It does not directly mix with the concerns of life, but take upon it the impressions of all good and noble actions. All the higher powers and energies in man, either latent or revealed, reside there. It is here that we catch the glimpse of those powers and possessions, those right and privileges, which make man the moral and spiritual being that he is. It is here that we come across those higher emotions and loftier feelings which exult and ennoble humanity, and give it a peculiar position and prominent seat in creation,—above all creatures and things. It cannot, at the ordinary stage of human evolution, manifest itself,—reveal its nature in full and exhibit higher power resident therein,—namely Will-power, Omniscience,—Omnipotence &c. They can be revealed by some conditions to be fulfilled before they can be manifested. Some amount of culture and training is necessary for its full or partial revelation.

This is *Sadhana*.—whether *Tantric* or *Yogic*. By this alone man can go beyond his gross or fine, his physical or astral, body. *

* We have given some idea of the Hindu Philosophy ;—we need not say, this Occult Philosophy is only a part of it and fully based on it. It is accepted by the Yogees of the Patanjala and the Vedanta Philosophy as well as the Tantrikas of the various Tantras.

But the man, as being spiritual in essence and character, cannot directly act on the molecules of dense gross matter,—on the four lower *principles* which it comes to rationalise and revive and influence. Now this difficulty is met in this way. To enable itself to function through them, it projects part of its own substance to influence and illumine the lower principles. This projection, clothing itself with astral matter, becomes the thinking principle in man and the means of connection and communication between Spirit and matter.

The *Lower Manas* (mind)—as it is called in contradistinction to the *Higher Manas* (the Immortal Thinker—the great human Ego), resides in the region below, tending towards the passions (*Kamas*), but still retaining its hold on the source from which it has come. Being a reflection of the *Manas*, where all is goodness and purity, in it reside all the nobler and higher impulses. The *Lower Manas*, joined with *Kama*, is the really working principle in man,—the personal Self,—the rational but earthly intellect with matter all round,—the human personality that acts and moves in the every day concerns of life.

Now there goes on a conflict between the lower impulses and the region of *Kama* and the nobler emotions of the plane of the *Manas*. If the latter prevail, the turbulence of the impulses will abate and gradually subside, and the lower *Manas*, instead of being soiled and contaminated, will be able to retain its natural

purity and brightness. And if every temptation to diverge from the right course be checked, if every inclination running to excess be subdued and efforts made to shun vice and sin, and follow and cultivate virtue, then the lower *Manas* are sure to triumph over *Kama* and capable of transmitting to the region below the nobler impulses of the higher plane, and thus some progress is made towards advancements to higher planes. And if this state is continued life after life, *Kama* is made to yield to the lower mind and its exorbitant and overwhelming demands being gradually silenced and suppressed, the glorious consequences will be that the ray will be on its way towards unification with the Source, and the sun of the plane of the *Manas* will encounter no opposition in rising in the world below, dispelling all darkness and making its influence felt all over. But if in every moral trial, the higher impulses be compelled to bow and bend and the passions given the superiority, the *lower mind* will by degree be distanced from the pale and power of the *higher manas* and the abyss of moral degradation will yawn beneath. And if this course be persisted in, if a man be always guided by brute instincts and animal passions and pay no heed to the dictates of conscience and wisdom, the fatal consequence will ensue, and *lower mind* will be completely gained over by *Kama* and it will no longer have its natural hall mark. Thus then does the real man cease to exist and the brute governs the system.

After the dissolution of the body, the *Manas* flee to a state of Supreme Peace and Felicity known as *Devayana* * to enjoy there a period of rest and bliss for the good actions performed on the earth below, the impressions of which † it has taken upon itself. And when that period is over, it seeks fresh fields and pastures new in the material world to appear again in the drama of life. And thus does it continue in these *comings in* and *goings out*,—immutable, imperishable and incurrutable.

The next two *Principles* are jointly known as *Atma-Budhi*. ‡ *Budhi* is the vehicle of *Atma*, (the Soul),—it is the medium of its manifestation. These two are intimately connected with each other in such a way that the one cannot exist without the other.

Atma (the Soul) is the highest *Principle* in man, and it is the most abstract part of human nature. Although incapable of directly acting in the dense, gross, material planes in consequence of its most subtle and rare composition, it enters into its influences and contributes to the existence and action of every thing that exists. It is the source from which, though invisible and imperceptible and taking no part in the

* Literally the path of the Devas. Please see our previous notes in which we narrated the doctrines of Sankaracharya.

† Impressions are the *Sanskaras* of the Hindu Philosophy. They only accompany the Soul when it leaves the body.

‡ *Buddhi* is translated by *Understanding*.

business of life, the manifested Universe derives its life and energy, its sustenance and vitality. One Universal, all-embracing SOUL is disseminated all over the Universe ; * every part and plane of the creation, every kingdom and department of Nature, every-thing and every body in the world,—every atom and particle, is filled and vivified with it,—it is the ONE FORCE that animates all.

In man this Universal Principle which we call SOUL is individualised and joined to *Budhi*,—thence these TWO are joined to the *Manas* and belong to a higher region where the laws of Matter do not reach.

Thus according to the Occult Philosophy, this GREAT SOUL is omniscient, omnipotent and almighty. If this be the case,—it says, it is possible for man, in this life to get possession of his own Nature and his own powers. The processes by which this can be achieved is the *Yoga* of the Hindu Philosophy and Occultism of the Tantras.

* As we have already elaborately dealt with the Nature of the SOUL, we need not dilate upon it further here in this place.

CHAPTER XIX.

The Tantrika Yoga.

How can a man go beyond his material nature and acquire his omniscience, omnipotence and almighty powers? The Yoga says :—"This can be achieved by *Jama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dhyana, Dharana* and *Samadhi*."

The Tantra says :—"This can be done by awakening *Kula Kundalini*." We shall first give some quotations from the Sastras and then try to explain them.

"Thou hast asked for some light to be thrown on the practice of Yoga. I shall vouchsafe a reply to thee. O king, harken to, the means which have enabled one to control *Prana* as it yields a rich harvest. † The first and fundamental necessity is that one should divest himself of all affinities for objects, except those that adhere to the mind in the furtherance of those actions upon which it is bent."

"Next follow proper diet, easy posture, purity of mind and body, and knowledge of the true meaning of the many treatises on the Yoga, and unremitting prac-

* We have already given an idea of Yoga.

† This is a translation from the great work *Yoga-Vashista*.

tice accordingly, with the help of the wise Guru. The practitioner should completely divest himself of all anger and greed, and refrain from hatred of others. If he should only study practically the nature of *Prana* and then master them, their nature will, like subjects, enable him to rule the Universe, to become Moksha-like, and develop *Siddhis*.

There is, among the one hundred *Naris*, * one incomparable, called *Antravestini*. It is like a vortex or the circular sounding boards of the *Vina* the harp. † This will be found to pervade all places and all bodies from that of Brahman down to the Ego. Like the coiling body of a serpent when it sleeps, shivering with cold, this ever immovable *Nari* coils itself up and rests firmly in the *Prana Vayu*. Like a flower, it is exceedingly delicate within. In this *Nari*, it is said there, is a pure and resplendent *Power* called *Kundalini* which will enable man to have mastery over the tremendous power of Nature. This *Sakti* (power or force) will ever be hissing like an angry female serpent. It will ever raise up its head. It is the cause of the

* We shall by and by try to explain the great *Nari-Chakra* of the Tantra Sastras. It is based on the unknowable nervous system of the human body. *Prana* rules it.

Prana is the Life Power. We refer our readers to Vevakanand's Raja Yoga where he has ably explained what *Prana* really is. It is not vital breath or breathing as some mistakenly believe.

† *Vina* is the celebrated Hindu musical instrument.

fluctuations which take place in the mind. All the other *Naris* are connected with this *Kundalini Sakti*. It,—this great Sakti,—this *Kula Kundalini*,—becomes purified only by the immaculate rays of Wisdom. It is transformed into Wisdom through Meditation.”

We again quote from the same great work.

“Many are the incurable diseases which take rise in the body through the contraction and distention of the orifices of the *Naris* in the joints &c. When the fixed mind is agitated, then this body also follows in its wake. And when the body is agitated, then there is no perception of things that one sees in one’s way and *Prana* flies from its even path into a bad road ; then it will stagger from its proper course like an animal hit by and reeling under the wound of an arrow. Through such an agitation, *Prana*, instead of pervading the whole body steadily and equally, will vibrate everywhere at an equal rate. Therefore the *Naris* will not maintain a steady position, but will quiver. Then to the body which is the receptacle of food digested partially or completely, the *Naris* are simply death, through the fluctuations of *Pranas*. The ‘food which settles itself down in this body amidst such a commotion is transformed into incurable diseases.’”

“Now harken to what is taught regarding the path of Yoga which enables one to master *Kundalini*. If through the practice of *Asiraka*, the above mentioned *Kundalini* is replenished and caused to shine with a resplendent light, then the body acquires the stability

of the mount Meru, and becomes strong. Then if the intelligence pervading this body which is filled with *Prana* through inspiration takes an upward course, it will make that body a walker of the sky. With the agility of a serpent, the *Kundalini Sakti* will rise up erect like a plantain stock. Having drawn into itself from high all the *Nadis* that bind up the body like strings, it will cause them to inflate from below, as does a bladder although immersed in water. Thus through intense practice of *Yoga*, the *Yoges* rise up in the air and roam therein. If this *Kundalini Sakti* gets into *Sushumna*, * going up the *Brahmarandhra* † and having reached the distance of twelve digits from the nose, stays there for forty-eight minutes after performing *Rechaka*, by which the actions of all *Nadis* are arrested, then the person is able to see all "walkers of the skies." If the immoveable *Prana* is rendered steady

* *Sushumna* is one of the *Nadis*.

Nadi is artery or vein,—but here these are not meant. These *Nadis* are not the arteries through which the blood courses through the human body. They are rather the nerves. We shall fully explain them later on. This is one of the great mystery of Tantrikism.

† We have already given our readers some idea of *Pranayama* of *Yoga*. *Puraka*, *Rechaka* and *Kumbhaka* are its different processes. *Puraka* is inhaling breath. *Rechaka* is exhaling breath and *Kumbhaka* is to stop the breathing completely. We shall presently give a translation from the *Yagnavalkya Samhita* which is no better than a Tantrika work.

for long time, flowing to a distance of twelve digits from the face, through the practice of *Recñaka*, then entry into other bodies can be effected."

We shall, to further elucidate this subject, give a complete translation of a chapter from the *Yagmavalka Samhita*.

"Henceforward I proceed to describe Contemplation (*Dharana*) of the *Five Tatwas*. The wise who know the essence of this Science call Contemplation that which consists in making the mind full of *Sama* and other qualities in *Atma* (Soul). The fixing of the mind in the external *Akasa* (space or sky) carried into the internal one which is ever present in the lotus of the heart situate within this abode of Brahman (the human body) is also called Contemplation by those who understand these things, and this is approved of also by the *Tantrikas*, the wise and the learned.

Contemplation is of five kinds. Hear these severally described. It is five-fold in consequence of the Contemplation of five different Gods, respectively in five elements, namely *Khiti* (earth), *Apa* (water), *Teja* (fire), *Marut* (space), and *Boma* (Ether).

The position of the first of these *Five Tatwas* is between the feet and the knees ; of the second, between the knees and the rectum ; of the third, between that point and the heart ; of the fourth, between the heart and the middle of the eye-brows ; and of the fifth, from that place upward. There are, however, some who believe themselves learned in the essence of Yoga who

hold a different view. † They assign to water the region between the knees and the navel and to fire that between the navel and the throat ; the fourth and the fifth the air and the ether are placed respectively to the region between the throat and the top of the fore-head and the fore-head and *Brahmarandhra* (the crown of the head). But those who understand the true meaning of the *Sastras* do not accord their assent to this distribution.

All the Effects, from Brahman downwards, should again be drawn into their respective Cause, the last being merged into Siva, the highest object of Contemplation. The mind may then be merged in the essence of all, the Supreme Atma.

But in this manner, other *Yogees*, who have full realisation and experience of Brahman, say that Effects should be merged into the Cause simply with the help of the Word of Glory, for when the "voice of success" within is to be heard after Contemplation in the Word of Glory, the Supreme Purusha, whose body is all joy, who is none other than Absolute Brahman, whose glory is deep yellow, Atma appears before the mind's eye. Be thou, therefore, prepared to practise at least three *Pranayamas* each time, repeating the Word of Glory all the while ; and merging the Effects into their respective Causes, lose yourself in the eternal glory of the Purusha just described. •

The physicians of the Gods, well acquainted with Yoga and having full knowledge of Brahman, say in

regard to the utility of this process :—“The body is made up of five Tatwas ; and is full of the three humours,—namely *Vayu* (wind), *Pitta* (bile) and *Kafa* (phlegm).

The body governed by *Vayu* is reduced in bulk by the practice of *Pranayama*, whereas that governed by *Pitta* does not undergo a similar change. If *Kafa* predominates, the body becomes full in a very short time. Diseases produced by *Vayu* are destroyed by Contemplation in the *Tejas i.e.* Agni, and these, together with those produced by *Kafa*, are removed by the Contemplation on *Prithivi* and *Apa*. Contemplation on *Akasa* relieves diseases arising out of the disturbance of the three humours. The physicians of the Gods emphatically declare that diseases of the last kind are easily removed even by *Pranayama*. Hence attend carefully to the daily duties in this behalf, and practise Contemplation with due care.

Henceforth I begin to describe the meaning and method of what is called Abstraction (*Dhyana*), for this is the cause of the bondage as well as absolution. Absorption or Abstraction (*Dhyana*) is the identification of the mind with *Atma*, and this is done in two ways. From this Absorption itself is regarded as of two kinds, i.e. concrete (*Saguna*) and abstract (*Nirguna*). The first of these two is of many divisions. Five kinds of Absorption sanctioned by the Vedas are declared by the wise to be good, but only three of them are said to be very good, the best being only one,—the abstract. Having

well studied the positions and functions of the *Naris* (vital nerves) of the body, and having well mastered a minute knowledge of the position, function and action of the *Pranas* (vital breaths) and having also become familiar with the ways of those who know *Atman*, one should apply himself to abstract Absorption. This is of the form of the constant mental conviction of "I am Brahman,"—one eternal, without beginning, middle or end, all glorious, all purity, all pervading, all *Akasa*, endless, immovable, unsurpassable, great, small, not comprehensible by the eyes, not even of the form of *Akasa*, without smell or taste, incomprehensible, free from change, all bliss, ever new, neither being, nor not being, the cause of all causes, the support of all, one without the second, formless, without parts, unseen, within, without, everywhere, all eyes, all feet, all trunk, all head. Those who are devoted to the observances of formal religion contemplate, without the body, upon the highest, eternal and blissful Atman, giving it the form of the Supreme Purusha of deep yellow colour, having learned the method from some initiated Preceptor.

Or they do fix the mind upon and identify themselves with the form of the Lord Vasudeva, locating it in the lotus of the heart, with eight petals, raising out of the central knot which is the navel, supported on a stalk twelve digits long and blooming fully by the force of Pranayama,—Vasudeva, the cause of the Universe, Narayana, unborn, all pervading, having four

hands, of beautiful shape, bearing his usual insignia—conch, disc, mace, adorned with coronet, bracelets, and other ornaments, with eyes resembling the half of the lotus, having the mark of the *Sreevatsa* jewel on his chest, the Lord of Lakshmi, with face as bright as the full moon, having the colour of the white and red lotus, * all joy, wearing a hearty and pleasant smile, as bright as a piece of spotless rock-crystal, wearing yellow garments, with the mark of a lotus on the soles of both his feet, one with the highest Brahman, Atman, changeless, shining with native effulgence, being the greatest Purusha present in the heart of all. This is called concrete Absorption (*Dhyana*).

The place of the object meditated upon must be the lotus of the heart, having *Mula Prakriti* for its base, the occult Siddhis for its petals, true knowledge for its filaments, the true gnosis for its petals, true and blooming fully under the great Sun, the Word of Glory. In this spot should be mentally fixed the great fire called the *Vaishnavara*, sending forth its effulgence in all directions, burning all around with a bright glow, the cause of the Universe, Ishwara, illuminating itself from top to bottom. In this *Vaiswanara* should be sought a jet, as steady as the flame of a lamp protected from the slightest breeze, with the great *Atman* shining in it in all its native splendour,—immu-

This is a description of Srikrishna or Vishnu. Every one can contemplate the God or the Goddess he worships.

table, resembling a dark cloud, as brilliant as the flash of lightning, as yellow as the *Nivara* grains, the cause of all causes.

This form must be recognised as the *Vaiswanara* and should be identified with one's self. This kind of concrete Absorption being complete, the student becomes identified with *Vaiswanara* and obtains absolution (Emancipation).

Another method consists of realising mentally a picture of the Sun, and becoming fully absorbed in it,—the Sun, the soul of every thing under heaven, the Purusha, all gold, even up to the nails of his hands and feet and hair of the body,—the lord Hari incarnate.

Or the Ged Prajapati may take the place of the Sun,—Prajapati, sitting in the *Padmasana* posture on the well-known lotus,—having four faces, all calm, as white as the leaf of the white lotus, the object of Universal adoration and declared by the sacred books as the Endless. Absorption in this case consists in identifying one's self with one or the other, thus presented to the mental vision.

These three are the great paths to absolution and the wise do indeed attain absolution by the said absorption into the Sun. The highest *Jnana* is the conviction, 'I am that which is Atman,' which is Light, located in the space between the eye-brows, the cause of all, pervading the whole body from the centre to the top, the indescribable which shines with immeasurable splendour.

The following is another method of Absorption: Having assumed the *Padmasana* posture, one should imagine himself to be all Siva, keeping the eyes fixed all the while on the tip of the nose,—Siva, free from all change, the greatest God, all peace, the highest Atman, immutable, all light, immortal and located in the middle of the eye-brows.

A different method of concrete Absorption would be the realisation in the lotus of the heart, fully blowing, having the moon in the centre of one's own *Atma* as of undefined form, the subject of all experience, immutable, surrounded in all directions with the rays of the moon, emitting nectar, the highest Purusha, bathed in streams of nectar, following from the lotus of the head, having sixteen petals, and lying with its face downwards. On the whole body being filled with this nectar, the student should identify himself with this Atma-Purusha. One conquers death by the practice of this Absorption for six months and become without doubt completely *emancipated* within a year. To one who is alive though emancipated, there is not the least possibility of being in contact with evil or misery in any shape. It being so, it is impossible to describe the degree of happiness within reach of one who is thus *freed* for ever, but the really difficult thing is indeed to be *freed*. Therefore give up all idea of the results of your acts, connect not yourself with the possible results of your duty, and devote yourself to the practice of proper *Dhyana*. The wise speak of innu-

merable methods and kinds of *Dhyana*, but of these, those described here are the principal, the rest being not so useful. The wise having realised *Atman* within themselves, whether concrete or abstract, become lost in ecstasy, a course which you should not fail to imitate.

CHAPTER XX.

The Tantrika Sadhana.

The Tantrika Sadhana is also *Yoga* in another name. They too say that *to control Chittabritti is Sadhana*. How is this to be done ?

First by the acquirement of the *knowledge of the body*.

Second by the acquirement of the *knowledge of the Soul or Self*.

Third by the acquirement of the *knowledge of the Great Soul—Brahman*.

Now there are seventy two thousand of nerve-currents which are called *Naris*. Amongst them three are the most important,—they are called *Ira*, *Pingala* and *Susumna*. They all go up towards the brain-centre.

Ten other *Naris*,—namely * *Gandhari*, *Prasara*, *Hastijwava*, *Jasa*, *Alambasa*, *Kuhu*, *Sankhini* &c., lie extended all over the body, and from them thousand other *Naris* run all over the body. *

* These *Naris* evidently mean *nerves*,—not *arteries*. The modern Physiological Science knows very little of the nerves and brains. They are the connecting *links* of the *Human Soul* with the *Human body*.

There are ten kinds of *Vayus* * in the body. They are *Prana*, *Apana*, *Samana*, *Udana*, *Byana*, *Naga*, *Kurma*, *Krikara*, *Devadatta* and *Dhananjaya*. They are placed in the various parts of the body, *Prana* being placed on the heart.

Besides the *Naris* and *Vayus*, the *Tantras* speak of six *Chakras*—wheel or circles,—which are said to be in the body. They are called *Muladhara*, *Swadheshtana*, *Manipura*, *Anapata*, *Visudha* and *Agna*.

Now to control all these is *Sadhana*. How is this to be done? By certain processes. First you will have to practise *Ashana*, *i. e.* to sit properly and to sit in such a way as would be conducive to the success of *Sadhana*.

These “seats” are of eighty kinds;—amongst them the *Seats* called *Padma*, *Siddha*, *Vadra* and *Swastika* are the best. †

Now comes *Nari Sudhi*,—the purification of the *Naris*. The *Yoga*,—*Raja Yoga*,—does not mention it,—but *Sankara Swami*, has thus explained it in his commentary on the *Swetaswatara Upanishad*. “The mind that has been purified by *Pranayama*,—that

* *Vayu* is not exactly what we understand by *Air* or *Wind*. We cannot give its exact equivalent in English. We shall try to explain it fully later on.

† We need not explain all these various “seats.” The posture which is conducive to concentration of mind is to be reckoned as the best.

mind only becomes steady in Brahman. For this reason, *Pranayama* has been enjoined by the Sastras. First is the *Nari Suddhi*,--the purifications of the *Naris*. When that is done, then one attains the capacity of *Pranayama*. You will have to press your right nostril by the thumb and draw breath as hard as possible by the left nostril. Then without a moment's break you will have to press the left nostril and draw breath by the right nostril, then again according to the process mentioned above, you will have to draw breath by the left nostril and throw it out by the right nostril. This is to be done four times every day,—i. e. in the early morning, at noon, in the evening, and at the middle of the night. This drawing and throwing breath should be practised twice or thrice every time. If this is done for a fortnight or for a month, then the *Naris* would be purified."

Then comes *Mudra*. They are of twenty-five kinds. Amongst them the following are the chief, namely—*Mahamudra*, *Khachari*, *Saktichalani*, *Mahivanda*, *Viparita Karini*, *Jalandharvanda*, *Mahaveda*, *Uddiyamava*, *Mulavanda* and *Vajrani*.

You will have to press your lower part with the heels of your left foot, and then you will have to stretch out your right foot and hold its toes by your fingers. Then you will have to place your chin on your chest, and then you will have to stare simultaneously with your two eyes at the middle of the two eye-brows. This is called *Mahamudra*.

To send up your tongue to the tonsil and thus in this state you will have to meditate upon the great Mother. This is called *Khachari Mudra*.

The great *Sakti* (force) called *Kundalini* sleeps at the navel. To awaken her and take her to the *Apana Vayu* is called *Sakti Chalani Mudra*.

This is the most popular *Sadhana* of the *Tantrikas*,—the followers of the *Tantras*. Various processes have been mentioned in order to do this. It is said, if a man be successful in this, he becomes almighty, all powerful, omnipotent and immortal. The whole Universe becomes his slave. He becomes the sole master of both the matter and the spirit.

But this *Kundalini* cannot be awakened from her sleep, and she cannot be taken up to the highest point without *Pranayama* which means the control of *Prana*.

She is described as a snake, lying curled just at the root of the spinal column. She is the great *Sakti*,—the omnipotent power that always exists in the human body,—she is the great Fire that, if kindled up, lighten the darkness that envelops the human body.

If awakened, she goes right up to the heart where is seat of the great SAKTI,—the great Universal Mother. She goes up the spinal column in a zig-zag way,—i. e. she goes up first to the left and then to the right, and so on till she reached the great central point where resides the GREAT ONE. When this could be done,—man becomes *enlightened*,—all the darkness of

his mind is destroyed by this great Fire, and he then becomes able to do whatever he wills.

This can be done by the control of *Prana*,—for which *Asanas*, *Mudras* &c. are necessary helps. The *Yagavasishta* thus speaks of *Prana*. “Divide a filament of the lotus-stem into a thousand parts, and you will find this *Vayus* more subtile than that. Hence it is difficult for me to treat of the nature of these *Vayus* ; of these, *Prana* does ceaselessly vibrate in this body with an upward motion, both externally and internally, which *Apana* having the same fluctuating tendency, vibrates both externally and internally to the body, having a downward motion. It will be beneficial if the *Prana* exhaled to the extent of sixteen digits is inhaled to the same extent. Those who have brought to experience this i. e., the equalisation of *Prana* in exhalation and inhalation, will enjoy infinite bliss. We hear of the characteristics of *Pranaś*. The inhalation to the extent of twelve digits of the *Prana* which has been exhaled is called the internal *Puraka*, when *Apana Vayu* re-enters the body from outside without any effort. When *Apana* ceases to manifest itself and *Prana* becomes absorbed in the heart, then the time occupied in such a state is the internal *Kumbhaka*. When *Prana* in the *Akasa* of the heart manifests itself externally to the heart within in diverse aspects without any application to the mind, then it is called the internal *Rechaka*,—inhalation. When the externally fluctuating *Prana* enters the nose and stops there in its

tip, then it is called the external *Puraka*, but if passing from the tip of the full blown nose, it goes down twelve digits, then it is also called the internal *Puraka*. When *Prana* goes without and *Apand* within, then it is called the external *Kumbhaka*.

When the shining *Apana* takes an upward bent within, then it is called the external *Rechaka*. All these practices lead to *Moksha*. Those who have understood and practised all the external and internal *Kumbhakas* will never afterwards be reborn."

And again :—

"The fluctuation of *Prana* can be arrested through the steady practice of *Pranayama* such as *Puraka* and others in this body done in a solitary place and with a cheerful heart and through the meditation on the Wisdom within. Excessive meditation is to be made upon the true nature of the sound uttered at the end of OM, then *Prana* will be controlled. If the tip of the tongue be reversed and raised up to the *Uvalu*, the rest of the tonsil, thereby making the air go up the gullet, then will the *Prana* be controlled.

* *Puraka* is drawing in of the breath i.e. inhalation.

Rechaka is throwing out the breath, i. e. exhalation.

Kumbhaka is the total and complete stoppage of the breath.

The modern science does not admit of *Kumbhaka*, but many cases might be cited where *Sadhus* have been found without any breathing and beating of the heart for months together. Such an instance was Haridas Sadhu who was tried by Maharaja Runjit Sing of the Punjab.

Now it is found that every thing depends upon this one *Prana*. It is not air, neither it is breathing,—inhalation or exhalation. Whether he is a Yogee or he is a *Tantrika*, all aspire to have complete control over this *Prana*. A *Yogee* may follow, and practise certain processes,—a *Tantrika* may bring the *Five Tatwas*,—but both's aim is the complete control of the *Prana*. First comes *breathing*,—it preserves the life. Then comes *Naris*,—the nerve currents,—they connect the body and the external objects with the mind. The third naturally is the *mind-powers*,—which is the connecting link between the Soul and the body. The last comes the *Prana* which is the connecting link as it were with the great Soul. Therefore he who can control and conquer this *Prana* attains to Eternal Beatitude and Emancipation.

To control the *Prana* and in order to conquer it, one must therefore begin with his breathing, then he must control his breathing, then he must control his nerve currents and then his mind ; unless these three are successfully controlled,—none can control his *Prana*. With reference to this a beautiful story is told ;—we shall mention it here.

Once upon a time there was a king who was offended with his minister and ordered him to be kept imprisoned in a room on the highest top of a high castle. The minister was forcibly taken to that small room and there he waited for a slow death. But his wife was very much devoted to him, and at dead of

night she came to the foot of the castle and called for her husband. The imprisoned man stood out of his room, but he was far above her reach. She plaintively asked, "Tell me how I can get you out of your prison."

The minister replied, "Come to-morrow night with ~~these~~ things,—one thick long big rope,—one strong thin rope, one bundle of thread, a long piece of silk-thread, some honey and one black beetle."

The wife was much surprised to hear this,—but she took all the things asked for the very next night. The minister then told her, "First attach the silk thread very strongly around the beetle and then put small honey on its small horns. When you have done this, let it be placed head upwards on the wall of the castle."

The wife did as she was bid. Then the beetle, scenting the honey that was on its horns and which it could not eat, went slowly up the wall. It thought the honey must be in front, so it went on and on, hoping to enjoy it,—but the honey it never reached. So on and on it went and at last reached the summit where the minister was. He immediately caught it and with it the silk thread. He then asked his wife to attach the fine thread at the other end of the silk. He then carefully and slowly dragged it up and finally got the end of the thread in his hand. He then asked his wife to attach the fine rope at the end of the thread. When it was done, he dragged it up also and got it in his

grasp. He then asked the strong thick rope to be attached with the end of the fine rope. This also he dragged up and got the rope. He then strongly bound it with the iron bars of his room and escaped by lowering himself down with the help of the rope.

Such is the case with our soul. The breathing is like the fine silk-thread,—the bundle of thread is our nerve currents,—the fine rope is the mind and the thick rope is the *Prana*. With the successive helps of this four, our Soul can escape from the prison of our body. It can know its own true nature.

This is the aim and object of every Sadhu,—whether he is a Saiva or a Tantrika, or anything else. The *Rajasika* Sadhus attempt to attain to *Samadhi* by *Raja Yoga*. The *Tantrika* Sadhus also aspire to it,—though perhaps they rather aspire more for worldly powers—super-natural powers,—almighty powers,—than for complete *Samadhi*. And what is this *Samadhi*?

CHAPTER XXI.

Samadhi.

The Yagmavalka Sanhita thus explains it :—

“I proceed to describe the condition of Ecstasy (Samadhi), the means of destroying the bonds of this world, for those who are entrapped in this Ecstasy is in that condition wherein the *Jiva* (the human soul) is lost in the Paramatna (the Supreme Soul), in other words, the merging of the subjective Ego into Brahman. As absorption in Atman goes on depending itself, so Ecstasy brought about in all effective manner. Hence having fixed the mind in Atman, we should not move away from it till Ecstasy is induced. This rule applies to all things, and one becomes whatever he identifies with, and falls into Ecstasy over the subject thus brought under contemplation. As a volume of water after entering the ocean loses its individuality, so is Self lost in the Great Self in *Samadhi*.

One, attending to all religious duties in a regular manner and having full control over his mind, should reason out the teachings of his preceptor into full grown convictions and should become firmly attached

to that conviction after consulting as often as necessary with the wise and the learned. He should then apply himself to the method of bringing about union (*Yoga*) of *Atma* (the human soul) with the *Paramatma* (the Supreme Soul) and should, from signs and indications, internal as well as external, given by age &c. determine the moment of his death.

He should then remain perfectly calm, ever in bliss, in full control of his senses, devoted to duty and to the good of all, and should pass his lore over to his son together with all secret *Mantras* he may know and should complete the remaining *Sanskaras* to his mortal body. Then he should withdraw to some holy spot situated in a pious country, resorted to by the wise and learned. Having there spread the *Kusa* grass or the skin of the black antelope on the ground, he should squat upon it in the *Padma Ashana* posture, protecting his body. With proper *Mantras*, and sitting with the face towards the east or north, he should then close the nine orifices of the body and should concentrate all his mind upon the light of the *Atman*, the formless Cause of all, situated in the *Akasa*, in the lotus of the heart made to open by *Pranayama*.

The *Prana* should at the same time be carried to the crown of the head and the great cause all bliss, should be fixed by the way of contemplation on the spot between the eye brows. He who dies in this manner with mind fixed on the *Paramatma* and repeating the great Word of Glory OM which is the

symbol of Brahman, becomes Paramatma, the Supreme Soul.

The wise must practise this Yoga which reveals the true glory of ATMAN, in order that it may be use to them at the last moment. For it is said by the wise that whatsoever thing one contemplates upon ~~at the~~ last moment, he becomes it, in consequence of being full of it. Those that are peacefully devoted to duty, give up the body while in the condition of Yoga, being one with the Self.

Those who attend to their prescribed duty, not losing the sight of the highest Gnosis accompanied with this Yoga and remain unaffected by the results of their acts have absolution within the very palm of their hand. I have thus described in full detail what has been indicated by Brahman as the best way to absolution."

Swami Vivekanand thus explains Samadhi in his work *Raja Yoga*.

"When by the practices mentioned above, the mind becomes steady and firm and it is brought under control and when our power of perception is developed, then mind should be engaged in *Dhyana*—meditation.

In the beginning one should meditate upon the gross things. By this meditation,—we can go to the meditation of subtle things. If we be successful in the meditation of subtle things,—we shall then acquire

the capacity of meditation on nothing,—meditation on meditation only.

First mind* should be directed to the cause of the conception of the external things,—then it should be directed to the motions that ever exist in our nerve currents, and then it should be directed to obtain the capacity of conception of all actions and reactions within the body. When we shall be able to know how to separate all external things from internal actions, we shall then be able to see and perceive all fine elemental things,—all fine astral things,—and finally the finest of the very fine and subtle things.

When we shall be able to separate the motions within our body from any other things—then we shall know and perceive all the mind currents,—whether they are within my mind or within any others. And when we shall be able to know only the actions and reactions of the mind and nothing else, then we shall acquire the knowledge of every thing and every body,—in short we shall be omniscient.

We shall know this, we shall know the very base on which the mind rests, and therefore our mind will be under our complete control. Then we shall possess many great super-natural powers."

The Yogees say, "You must shut your both physical and mental eyes against these powers ;—if you

* This is called *Nirbikalpa Dhyana*. There is also *Nirbikalpa Samadhi*.

are tempted to use them, enjoy them, to wield them,—you will fall away from the true path of Yoga,—you will be deprived of the final end which is final unification with Brahman.”

But the Tantrikas,—at least many of them,—did not agree with the Yogees,—they rather longed for them and when acquired, use them at their heart's content. But they too, as we have said, aim to attain to the final Moksha.

When a Yogee is able to keep himself steady and unmoved, even when surrounded with all the almighty powers,—when he can control all his internal material and spiritual actions and become unmoved in every thing,—then he comes to *Samadhi*,—then only he sees his own true nature,—true entirely,—then his soul will reveal itself in its all glory ;—then he will find that he is Knowledge itself,—he is omniscient as well at omnipresent and all-pervading, he is immortal and infinite,—he is so from the beginning of the infinite time. And this state is called *Samadhi*, the aim and object of all,—all that aspire the GREAT FINAL END.

But we have said, that this can be done by controlling the *Prana*,—there is no other way. There might be many different processes for controlling the *Prana*,—for many wise men have formulated very many processes,—there are hundreds of ways promulgated in India for the control of *Prana*,—we need not mention them elaborately here. We have already given some idea

of Yoga processes,—we have also given some idea of the Tantrika Sadhana,—that is enough for our purpose. One process may suit me, but it may not suit another ; therefore it is quite natural that there should be promulgated various and numerous processes which are said to be capable of controlling the *Prana*.

But what is *Prana*,—we must first know its nature before we can make an attempt to control it.

CHAPTER XXII.

Prana.

According to our Philosophy the whole Universe,—all things created,—are composed of two different materials. One of this is called *Akasa*.

What is *Akasa* ? It is some thing,—some *existence*, which is all pervading and which is in every thing and every body. Whatever things in this Universe, visible and invisible, have forms,—whatever things are made by the commingling of other things are produced from this *Akasa*. This *Akasa* is turned into air,—this is also turned into water and all liquid things ;—it is also formed into solid things. From this *Akasa* are made the earth, the moon, the sun and the innumerable stars in the infinite space. • The bodies of all animals, birds, fishes, insects, all plants and trees and vegetables,—in fact any thing that we see and perceive is made of this *Akasa*.

It is not exactly the *Matter* of the modern science. It is so *fine* that it could not be perceived by our senses. It is beyond the conception of our senses. • When this *Akasa* becomes *gross* and visible in the shape of any thing, then only we can see it and perceive it. In

the beginning of a Creation, only this *Akasa* exists. When at a dissolution, all things are destroyed, they only come to be this *Akasa* again and remain as *Akasa* indescribable.

The question naturally arises by what *force* this *Akasa* turns into the visible and invisible Universe. There must be some *force*—or else it could not possibly act? The old Rishis have called this *force* as *Prana*. As *Akasa* is the cause, base, root material of the all pervading substance from which the Universe is created, so *Prana* is its manifesting and creating, all-pervading *force*,—the second cause of the creation of this Universe. When all things of this Universe merges in *Akasa* at the time of dissolution,—so all the *forces* that are to be found in the Universe merges into this *Prana*. *Prana* is the force of gravitation in the space, *Prana* is the magnetic force in the world. *Prana* is the force that courses through the nerves of our body. From the action of thinking down to every action of our body is the work of *Prana*. All actions, gross, fine or subtle, are the manifestation of *Prana*.

The Vedas asked, “When there was no existence; nor non-existence,—when all this was covered with darkness, what existed then?” They answered; “There was this *Akasa* and in it there was this *Prana*, both non-manifest,—but existing.”

This *Prana* exists as the *Vital* power, the life, in all beings. The mind or the mind power is a high and subtle manifestation of it, that is all. Mind does not

express all our mental and inner faculties. Now the lowest action of our mind-power is the instinct,—that acts without the necessity of dragging in conscious-thought or any other things. If any part of my body feels some pain, my hand instinctively goes there. It does not require any thought. They are the reflex-actions of the modern scientists.

Next is the consciousness of the mind power. In this I think, I reason, I argue, I judge,—but with it all the faculties of the mind are not finished. We always find that some thing appears in the mind which is beyond the ordinary mind faculties,—whence they come ? Then there must be some higher plane above and beyond the mind powers. There is *Prana* again behind the mind. All the actions in our mind and body, conscious or unconscious, are the vibrations, gross or fine, of this *Prana*,—and nothing else. What we think, what we perceive, conceive or feel are all the different actions of this *Prana*.

As *Akasa* is every where and in every thing, so this *Prana* also is in every thing and every where. As every thing is made of *Akasa*, so every external and internal,—visible or invisible, mental or spiritual, actions are made by this *Prana*.

Thus we find, if we go at the root of things,—we are all the same one single existence,—*Akasa* with *Prana*. A Scientist would say there is absolutely no difference between a piece of stone and the body of man,—as both are made of the same atoms. So there

is also absolutely no difference, between one man's mind with another's mind,—nay with the mind of a beast or a bird,—because they are all made of the same *Prana*.

If such is the case,—then a man who has been able to control this *Prana* has been able to conquer the whole forces. He has naturally conquered and tamed all the powers of the Universe. The infinite, irresistible,—all pervading *Prana* has been made his slave,—what is there then which cannot be done by him? The whole Nature has become his serving maid.

How is this to be done? How can this *Prana* be conquered? How is she to be known?

If we want to know her from the innumerable things manifest and unmanifest in the world, it is impossible to learn and know in one life, or for matter of fact, in hundreds of life. Therefore the holy Vedas asked, "Is there any such things, by learning and knowing which all things might be learnt and known?" And they and the Hindu Philosophies repeatedly said, "Yes, there is ONE;—to learn and to know HIM is to know and learn everything." Therefore he who has been able to capture this *Prana* has been able to capture all the material and spiritual forces that exist visible or invisible in this Universe. He who has conquered *Prana*, has not only conquered his own mind and soul, but has conquered the mind and soul of all men and beings of this Universe. He has conquered

his body as well as all the bodies that exist in this Universe.

Then the question arises, Is it at all possible to conquer one *Prana*? The Hindu Rishis have emphatically said, "Yes, it is possible. Nay—not only possible, but many have been often able to do it."

All the *Prana* practices of the Hindu Sastras, whether they are the Vedānta, Yoga, Tantrika and others, *Pranas*, they are all intended for the controlling and conquering of *Prana*. The present day religions, the Christian, the Muslim, the Spiritualist, and all the sects and orders are but trying to have their hold on this *Prana* and nothing else. They have only reached the fringe of this great *Prana* ocean. The Indians *Pranayamas* fully conquered it and became dreadfully powerful, nay sometimes fearful, and the Indian Yogis, abandoning even this *Prana*,—and all her almighty powers, went beyond and above it, and reached the *Pranā Gāh*,—the Eternal Reunion with the Great One.

Pranayama is nothing else than this controlling and conquering of the *Prana*,—the eternal, infinite, all pervading Force, the Mother and Source of all forces in this world. *Pranayama* is not the controlling of breath, — it is not *Puraka*, *Rechaka* or *Kumbhaka*,—they are mere some processes among many processes,—minor and elementary processes,—by which this great *Prana* can be controlled.

When a Tantrika begins his *Sadhana* with *Pancha Tattva*, namely wine, meat, fish, food and female,—he is following merely some minor and elementary processes to control and to conquer this *Prana*.

This *Prana* is all-pervading,—all powerful,—how can we control and conquer it? That which is the nearest is the most available material to begin with. They should be—must be controlled and conquered, therefore all that are near to us, close by us, should be our aim and object to conquer and control. Our body is the nearest of all things in the Universe. It is nearest to us,—but far nearer to us than body is our mind. The smallest portion of the *Prana* force of the Universe that rules over our bodies and minds is the nearest to us. Therefore if we can first control and conquer our this *Prana*, we can conquer all. Unless we can do this,—we cannot control and conquer her. Therefore we should first conquer and control our body, then our mind and then our *Prana*. When all these three are controlled and conquered, then all the *Pranas*,—the Universal, infinite, all-powerful *Prana*, are conquered.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The Allegorical form of Prana.

This *Prana* is then the assemblage of all the *Forces* in the Universe. It is the source of our body, of our life,—of our physical and mental actions. It is the source of our mind, our understanding, our consciousness,—nay it is the source of every thing. Both the *Yogi* as well as the *Tantrika* desire to control it, subjugate it and master it,—though their processes might be different but their aim is the same.

If *Prana* is controlled, if *Prana* is mastered,—the whole *Universal Force* is mastered,—therefore a man who masters *Prana*,—becomes as much powerful as he will be able to master *Prana* and so much he will get the supernatural and extraordinary powers.

Every thing,—almost every thing in India,—has been explained in allegory,—so this *Force* has been explained in allegory and allegorical terms, and this has been much elaborated by *Tantricism*. We have already mentioned that they say that there are two *Nerve* currents within the spinal column in the human body;—these two nerve current,

are called respectively, *Ira* and *Pīngalā* ;—they also mention that there is an empty artery through the spinal column, and this they call *Susanna*. At the root of this *Susanna*, there is a *lotus* which is the Seat of the *Kundalini*.

This seat is of the form of a circle ;—here does *Kundalini* lie curled like a snake when sleeping. When this *Kundalini* is aroused or awakened, she tries to rush upward through the *Susanna*. Step by step she rises,—and step by step the mind gets opened up and the man acquires by step by step various extraordinary and supernatural powers. This is the occult power of the *Tantrikas* as well as of the *Yogis*.

When the *Kundalini* at last reaches the crown of the head which has been described as a great lotus,—the mind and the body of the man are completely separated from him, and he then feels his own true nature ;—this is final Emancipation,—this is the union with great Brahman,—this is the undescribable *Brahma Nirvana*.

Now to awaken and rouse this *Kundalini* is the only means to acquire immense power,—nay almighty powers,—and this is the only means for the final Emancipation. Various means have been inculcated for the purpose of awaking *Kundalini* and taking her through the *Susanna* to the great lotus that is on the crown of the head. The Yoga is one ;—

the *Tantrika* Sadhanas are the other. Some awaken her by their deep devotion and love of God,—some again get her awakened by the power of some great devotees,—some again does it by deep learning,—deep philosophical thoughts or concentrated meditation of God.

The people generally call any thing extraordinary or any thing out of the ordinary level as supernatural powers. Whenever we find such extraordinary or supernatural powers in a man, we must know that some way or other this force of *Kundalini* has been able to enter into the *Susanna*. When a man thinks that he has been blessed with a reply to his deep prayers to God,—he only opens the mouth of his *Susanna* into which his *Kundalini Sakti* has entered. God directly does not grant his prayers—but He is in the shape of the *Kundalini*, and this *Kundalini* grants his prayer.

Almighty power lies in him dormant—asleep, and to make it active and awakened is the aim of all Hindu *Sadhus*, whether he is a Saiva, a Vaisnava or a *Tantrika* or any thing else.

This controlling and mastering of *Prana*, by which the *Kundalini* is awakened is called *Pranayama*. We have said, it is not controlling the breath only. If we can control our breathing,—we can then control our nerve currents; we can then control the *Prana*. It is all going inward, and inward till we

can reach the great Soul and rest there in heavenly peace and celestial bliss.

This can be achieved in various ways ;—this can be achieved by the great Yoga propounded by Rishi Patanjala ;—this can be achieved by the Tantrika Sadhanas ;—this can be achieved by deep devotion such as that of Jesus, Chaitanya and others ; this can be achieved by the highest knowledge as that of the Buddha and others. We have given some idea of all this in the foregoing pages,—we shall further elucidate the matter and make a long quotation from our Sastras. What we quote below is known by the name of the Tantrika Yoga.

“Attārgi, to what I say. Press the ankle of the left foot under you and meditate quietly upon the jet of the flame ;—so much waste of *Prana* thus stopped,—it flows up to the place of fire in the body. The fire then burns more brightly on being made the subject of contemplation every morning, evening and midnight. This practice should extend every time during ten days over a *Muhurta* † when the vital air, i.e. *Prana* being thoroughly mastered, various psychic experiences will dawn spontaneously upon the inner consciousness of the practitioner, for

* This is a translation from the *Vashistha Samhita*.

† *Muhurta* is forty eight seconds.

most of these experiences on the outward plane will be lightness of the mind and body, glossiness of the skin, followed by the keen-ness of appetite. The voice within will then begin to be heard, and if the practice is continued for six months or twelve months, physiological processes will alter. If the course of practice is prolonged to three years in the same manner, there remains indeed no reason to have fear from any thing.

Then the practitioner must unite the Vital Breath with the fire within by an effort of the will, and by this method should enkindle the latter into a blaze.

The *Kundalini*, lying at the navel and not as yet sufficiently distended, will by this process be moved to give access to the Vital Breath (*Prana*). In its normal condition, the *Kundalini* winds itself around the central knot and obstruct the upward course of the vital air through it by gagging its own mouth (the way of access) with the tail held fast in it. It lies like a sleeping serpent, ever shining with its own light. Its place is at the navel whether in birds, beasts or men. This serpent-like *Kundalini* is as as it were, warmed with the fire fanned into flame by the Vital Breath (*Prana*) taken to the place of its abode, in the manner aforesaid and is thus forced to open its mouth, as it were to give access to the Vital Breath with which it then becomes sufficiently inflamed. Thus the serpent at the navel being awakened, the *Prana* courses through it into the whole

body with the *Fire* thus produced,* even like the thread which passes through the length and breadth of a cloth.

Having thus got hold of the place of the serpent, the practitioner devoted to absorbing meditation should draw the *Apāna* up towards the point of the navel. O innocent one, when the Vital Breath (*Prāṇa*) passes along with the said fire beyond the navel and pervades the whole body, all diseases disappear,—fresh vitality and vigour are imparted to the whole system and the body shines with the supreme beauty. When the *Prāṇa* enters with the said fire into the *Brahmarandra*, (the crown of the head), the *Yogi* should meditate upon the brilliant jet of light which immediately appears in the heart. The Vital Breath thus held in the heart by this process of meditation enters the thousand petaled lotus situated on the head and turns its face upside down.

In the lotus of the heart, O Gargi, called the "City of Brahman" the *Prāṇa* appears like numerous Suns, shining simultaneously, in the morning. The fire extending from the centre of the heart to the opening of the *Susanna* appears like an unbroken streak of lightning in the clouds charged with water. The fire having been brought into the full blown lotus of the heart and the vital air being, as it were, burnt into it, external signs in the forms of the great learning* and supreme knowledge of Brahman manifest themselves.

The practitioner then fuse the Vital Breath into the Vital fire, repeating all the while the great Word of Glory—OM, and contemplate on the new moon in the middle of the forehead as bright as the thousand moons. Then the Prana may be fixed with the fire in the middle of the eye brows and the Yogee should get absorbed in the *Atman* within. In that "City of Brahman", O Gargi, all *Jnana*,—shines Jiva (human Soul) alone, independent of *Mahat* and others. In the heart, at the navel, and between the eye-brows, there burns a constant Jet of the fire of *Atman* entirely unseen. O Gargi, by all means try to realise this,—it is all light and bliss. He who meditates upon the light in the centre of his heart or in the middle of his eye-brows, comes to see *Sakti*,—which is the great *Kundalini*, breathing with light like the Jet of a lamp and realises Brahman at the same time. When the mind is entirely lost in the middle of the eye brows, then indeed is the whole of *Atman* seen by the Yogees at that point. Not only this but they experience a kind of gentle shock in the head which opens the way to a condition akin to clairvoyance, bringing within view Gods, Celestial scenes, stars, moons, Rishis, the *Siddhas*, the Gandarvas and the like.

After the practice whereby the mind becomes lost in the abode of Vishnu, the middle of the eye-brows or at the navel, is carried on for some time, the Yogee must concentrate his attention on the internal

cavity of the head, locating in it an image of the full moon for purpose of contemplation. The *Prana*, being held fast in the abode of Vishnu and the Jiva being absorbed into immortality at that point, the mind too becomes completely annihilated and approach is made to real Emancipation.

The *Prana*, being held fast in the abode of Vishnu, and the *Atman* being seen in the pure light of *Satwa*, supreme ecstasy and joy come. O Gargi,—try with pure heart to reach that condition.

The practitioner, keeping all observances and forbearances set forth at the beginning and observing strict temperance and asceticism in every thing, should go on with this practice and obtain the highest joy ever concealed from lay men in the deepest secret. Indeed, this “going” to the “City of Brahman” is the real *Moksha*.

But what is meant by the “City of Brahman”? O Gargi.—that from which all things immanate, that wherein they are sustained, and that where unto they finally return is the *BRAHMAN*, the formless as described in the holy Upanishad. He is also described in the *Sruti* which says :—“IT is ever immutable, and one, situate in the *Akasa*, pervading the *Lotus of the heart*, all light, all bliss, and imperceptible, being thus, as it were, enthroned in a case.” And again, “IT is minuter than the minutest,—greater than the greatest, ever present as in a case, within every being, ever free from evil and misery.”

Realise this extraordinary ESSENCE even in the death bed. Remove the *Prana* within the *vital fire*, to the crown of the head by the force of the WILL, and then go through the head in the manner indicated by an initiated Teacher and fuse the individual *Prana* with the cosmic, repeating the Word of Glory—OM all the while. If, dear friend, thou wishest to know how one can give up his body at will, I shall describe the process to thee. Repeat mentally the Word of Glory—OM, and send out the internal *Prana* through the Crown of the head, broken open to the purpose, (the highest *Chakra* being awakened by practice), thus becoming one with the *Atman* and casting away the useless body.

Having in private said this much, the real key of the whole Science, the surer way to *Moksha*, the pith of whole of *Yoga* and *Sadhana*, the means of destroying the bondage of births, the holy God, Siva, fell into an ecstasy. Having with proper words and salutation worshipped the *Guru* (Teacher), explaining this secret knowledge, the treasure of learning, the best among knowers of Brahman, the wisest of the wise,—the holy lady found the GREATEST BLISS within herself.

CHAPTER XXIV:

Controlling of *Prana*.

First is the control of breath. The *Vashistha Samhita* writes :—

“O Gargi, every one afraid of the miseries of life and of this world, should until death, attend either his or her daily duties with proper *Jnana* (knowledge) or to the proper study and practice of Yoga. The lungs should be filled with air drawn in at the left nostril, and this being done, the mind should be directed to and fixed upon the fire that burns at the centre of the system, locating the letter *Ra* and its sound at that point. Having retained the vital breath in this manner for as much time as we can without pain or suffocation, it should be exhaled slowly at the right nostril. This should immediately be followed by drawing in the breath at the same nostril, to be retained and exhaled at the left in the manner just described. *

* We give all these quotations and translations,—so that our readers might form a clear idea of these different processes of the *Yoga* and the *Sadhanas*. It is all an attempt to control and master the great *Prana* force that lies in us. It can be achieved by various ways.

This should be secretly done six times at every sun-rise, sun-set and noon, and the practice should be continued according to necessity for three or four months. The nervous system then becomes thoroughly purified and the accomplishments of this result may be inferred from consequent lightness of the body, strength of appetite, with power of digestion and the hearing of the supernatural sounds. The practice should be continued until these signs permit of its abandonment.

Henceforth I shall describe *Pranayama* (the controlling of *Prana*) in all its details. That which is called *Pranayama* consists in *Rechaka* (exhalation), *Puraka* (inhalation) and *Kumbhaka* (Retention) of the breath. These three correspond to the three letters of the Pranava OM. For *Pranayama* is not apart from it.

The breath should be drawn in at the left nostril until the belly is completely filled up. This process may extend over a space of time sufficient for mentally repeating the Word of Glory OM sixteen times in a measured manner, filling the mind all the while on the first letter A. The air thus taken in should be held within, while the Word of Glory OM is repeated sixty four times, keeping the attention centred on the second letter of OM i.e. U. Or the air may be held within for the time one can do so with ease. The breath thus retained should then be slowly let out at the opposite nostril, and the process need

not last longer than the time necessary for repeating the Word of Glory OM thirty-two times.

The attention should remain centred all the while on the last latter of OM, i.e. *M*. The process should be repeated in the reverse order to complete one *Pranayama*. Fill the lungs by the right nostril, repeating OM sixteen times, and keeping the attention fixed on the letter OM. The breath thus drawn in should be held within while OM is repeated two scores of times, the mind being fixed for the time on the great God or Goddess whose symbol is the letter A. Or the breath may be restrained only according to one's power, being in either case allowed at length to pass out slowly at the left nostril. This process may be repeated over and over again.

The time for the various parts of this process may be measured simply by repeating the sacred word OM ; or in the case of a Brahman, by the recitations of the holy *Gayatri* or any thing enjoined in the Vedas. The *Gayatri* may be pronounced at least twenty times after the performance of *Pranayama*. A Brahman well versed in the *Srutis* and devoted to religion may make use of *Mantras* drawn from the Vedas.

There are some, however, who prefer the use of *Mantras* derived from other sources. In a similar manner a woman may use her own *Mantras*. The Sastras, indeed, do permit such use to one of good character who has purified herself by austerities.

Sixteen *Pranayamas* per day ought to be the rule which observed with regularity, purify the practitioner of such crimes, as feticide and the like. The effect of the practice is potent enough to destroy in six months the sins of all the previous births and free one even from the sin of killing a Brahman. Hence, *Pranayama* should be carefully and regularly performed every day. Those who are in this manner devoted to *Yoga* as also to the practices of their own religion,—attain final *Moksha* through *Pranayama*.

Puruka is filling the lungs with air drawn in from without. The retention of the air, as in a sealed earthen pot (*Kumbha*) is called *Kumbhaka*. The expelling of the air is called *Rochaka*.

The *Pranayama* which during practice produces perspiration is of the lowest degree, whereas that accompanied by tremor of the body belongs to the middle degree; the highest being that whereby the body is raised upward from the ground. Till the highest degree of practice is reached, the practitioner should apply himself to the mastery of the lower stages of *Pranayama*. The breath, as it were, dies within the body when the highest stage is reached. The body is then elevated in the air, the action of inhalation and exhalation being suspended for the time. Though the action somehow takes place on the body, it is not perceptible when the highest stage is reached. When the process of breathing is entirely suspended that which is called absolute (*Kaibalya*), *Kumbhaka*

is secured; it is nothing more or less than constant retention of the breath without the use of either *Rechaka* or *Paraaka*. The *Pranayama* performed with the half of these is called *Sankhita* (conditional), whether *Sankhita* or *Kerala*, no one should neglect the performance of *Pranayama* at any time; and the *Sankhita* should assiduously be practised till the *Kerala* is reached.

Abundant *Kumbhaka* having been realised, there is nothing in all the three worlds which is beyond reach. The *Sakti* (occult powers) called *Mahayodita* (swiftness such as of the mind in going to and from place) manifests itself,—the grey hair resumes the colour of youth, divine sounds begin to be heard, in short *Kerala Kumbhaka* being reached, one comes to the last stage of *Moksha*.

Pranayama thus means the retention of the breath within the body and the method set forth brings about results which defy death itself, in all and every shape. I describe to thee, however, an easier method of mastering the *Prana*. Having filled the belly with the air drawn in from without at the time of sun-rise and sun-set, one should fix it by mental effort in the middle of the navel, at the tip of the nose, or at the point of the toes of each foot. This practice will guard the practitioner against all diseases, fatigue or exhaustion. The fixing of attention at the tip of the nose leads to the mastery over the *Prana*, and concentration on it bestows particular lightness to the

body. He, who draws the air in with the tip of his tongue and swallows it, feels no heat or fatigue and is never touched by disease. He who practises this at either sun-set or sun-rise continuously for three months, compels, as it were, the Goddess of Knowledge to make her abode at the tip of his tongue, and three months of practice frees him from the most incurable diseases of any description.

He, who concentrates upon the breath, having centred himself within himself, at the place of *Kundalini*, becomes instantly free from consumption and other diseases of the kind. He who draws in the air with the tip and holds it at the root of the tongue and swallows the nectar enjoys health and happiness. Or if one draws in the breath at the nostril and holding it at the root of the palate, swallows the nectar that drops on account of the heat, he becomes free from all diseases. He, who draws in the air within his tongue and swallowing it carries it to the middle of the navel or to the sides, allows it to remain within for about twenty minutes becomes free from diseases by continuing the practice for a month at sun-rise, sun-set and noon every day. He who practises any of these methods of swallowing the breath, or the ambrosia-juice for either six months or three months gets rid of such inveterate diseases as cramps, dropsy, poisoning of the blood, burning of the skin and all diseases of the mouth and throat, nay fever of any kind and varieties and even the deadliest poison is digested with perfect

impunity. It is needless to say more of the advantage of *Pranayama* ;—by its exercise, grey hair turns black and the old age blooms into youth.

Such is *Pranayama*. It is the best scientific way to the way to Salvation. We have quoted extensively from the various Shastras their discourses on *Pranayama*. In fact it is a Science in itself,—therefore we cannot of course do full justice to this great subject in this work, but we hope our readers have been able to form some idea of the great *Pranayama*.

CHAPTER XXV.

The higher stages of Prana.

Ô Gargi,—these are the methods of bringing *Prana* under control. One who applies himself to them, after having well mastered some one posture (*Asana*) with full concentration of mind and control over the senses will come out successful and happy. He should draw the *Apana* upward repeating the sacred word OM all the while. Again he should raise the *Apana* to the place of the vital fire and fuse the *Prana* with it at that point. The *Prana* may be held in the head till Ecstasy ensues. This should be done by stopping the two ears with the thumbs of both hands, the eyes by the fore fingers, keeping the mouth closed all the while. Thus indeed should all the active senses be controlled for the while with the hands. The *Prana* passes like a fine fibre of the lotus-stock by virtue of this method, through *Susanna* to the *Brahmarandhra* (the crown of the head). Divine internal sounds are produced by this process and the music resembling the sweet harmony of a Vina pervades the whole body up to the top of the head. The sound bears resemblance at first to the shrill and loud* blast of noise produced by the blowing of conch-shell and gradually

deepens into the thunder of heavy clouds.. The *Prana*, having been fixed in the *Brahmarandhra* and the mind fused in *Atman*, the Yogee becomes all joy ; and indeed, obtains perfect mastery over all *Saktis* (Forces).

Other Yogees of steady mind who always practise *Pranayama* without *Rechaka* or *Puruka* hold a different view. The ankle of the right foot as well as the left foot should respectively be pressed firmly against the left and right sides of the body and there should remain no space between the skin and the thigh of each foot thus placed. The trunk should all the time be held in a straight line. The eyes should then be directed towards the right ankle and OM should be mentally repeated in a constant manner. Whoever, with the mind thus brought to a point, sits in a secluded spot in this posture, repeating the sacred word OM,—if the person be a Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaisya, Sudra or female or practising Yogee (using any *Mantra* sacred to Siva or Vishnu) succeeds in sending the *Prana*, the activity of which is so much waste of vitality, to the place where burns the sacred fire and is able to neutralise the wasteful effects of its action by contemplation thereon. He will receive the effects of the central fire which manifests itself in lightness of limbs, keenness of appetite, and power of digestion.

These signs having been obtained, the *Prana* should be mentally removed to the point of the navel and held there under contemplation, repeating aloud the word OM or the *Mantra* as the case may be, until

the mind completely loses itself in the sun whose place is at the navel. The knower of the secret must persevere in this practice with patience and care. By this process of contemplation, the fire at the navel expands the nerve-currents,—the great Sakti,—*Kundalini*,—where-into the *Prana* thus finds easy access. By the expanding power of heat caused by the *Prana*, actually flowing in, the *Kundalini* becomes inflated and rises up to the point of the navel. The *Prana* thence rises at once to the seat of the *Susamma* in the *Brahmarandhra*. When the *Prana* has reached this point, the *Yogees* should remove it to the heart, mentally repeating the sacred word OM or the *Mantra* as the case may be and then fix it there. It should be there identified with the *Akasha* which fills the cavity of the heart and the whole body should be filled with air, the repetition of the OM being kept up all the time. It is, indeed, then that the light of *Atman* shines in native lustre like the Sun in the sky. If the *Yogee* desires to give up his connection with his mortal body, he should act in this way :—fixing the attention then on the OM, and breaking through the centre of the head by contemplation on the *Brahmarandra*, he may free his *Prana* and fuse it into the cosmic *Prana* which fills all space. The cosmic *Prana* being thus reached and immutable firmness being gained, the *Yogee* should merge his Self in the light and supreme bliss of *Atman*. Such a one is Brahman, Oh Gargi, he is never drawn into the vortex of rebirths.

Therefore, O beautiful one, practise *Pranayama* either all the time or at the two twilights. Those who are devoted to *Pranayama* reach the highest stage of BLISS.

There are four external divisions of Yoga ; hence forward I enter upon a description of the four internal ones,—which be thou prepared to hear with attention.

The first of these four is called *Pratyahara*. It consists in drawing away the senses from their respective objects in general experience. The recognition of the whole in a part (individual self) as the result of this process is the highest abstraction praised by them who know all about Yoga. The absence of desire for the performances of those religious acts, &c. which are enjoined to all is indeed the best help to Yoga, being always practised by the *Yogees*.

I now proceed, O Gargi, to enumerate the several vital points in the body as detailed by the *Ashwini Kumaras*, the physicians of the Gods, for a knowledge of these is essential to the success of Yoga, which is none other than the unification of *Micro* with *Micro-cosmos*. As I shall set forth all these in detail, pray attend with all your mind.

The big toes of the foot, the ankles, the middle of the abdomen, the rectum, the centre of the body, the secret organ, the navel, the heart, the cavity of the throat, the root of the tongue and the nose, the two eyes, the middle of the eye-brows, the forehead, the

crown of the head—these are the vital points in the body.

Now I shall describe the exact position of these—one after another. The toes are four and half finger breadths from the ankles and the middle of the thighs is ten from the same. The root of the thighs is eleven finger breadths from the middle of the thighs; the hips two finger breadths from this point and the middle of the abdomen nine from the hips.

The opening of the rectum (nine finger breadths) from the middle of the abdomen and the centre of the body two and half from that point. The secret organ is two and half digits above this point and the navel is twelve digits farther above. The heart is fourteen digits from the navel and the cavity of the throat is six digits above. The root of the tongue is four digits, from the cavity of the throat; the root of the nose four from this point, the eye being only half a digit from that. The middle of the eye-brows is only half a digit from the eyes, the forehead above and the crown of the head still further.

The practitioner of Yoga should carry the breath by abstraction to these points, one after another and contemplate it in every one of them. All diseases disappear by this practice and the actual study of Yoga bears fruit. This is the opinion of those who are well acquainted with all the secrets of Yoga.

Attend, O beautiful one, to the mode of abstraction which I now describe for thy benefit. Fill the body

with air from the toes of the feet to the crown of the head and hold the air within for as much time as you can by way of Pranayama. Abstracting the breath from the crown of the head, fix it at the forehead and moving it thence carry it to the middle of the eye-brows ; thence to the rest of the tongue, to the cavity of the throat, to the centre of the heart and to the navel one after the other. From the navel, remove it to the secret organ and thence to the centre of the body, whence again, draw it into the rectum and take it to the middle of the abdomen. From the abdomen, remove it to the thigh and carry it still downwards to the middle of the thighs. From thence abstract it to the ankles ; whence take it lastly to the toes and fix it there. The wise man in this manner abstracts the vital breath and carries it from place to place, being able to fix it at any point at any time, and is able to purify himself of all sins and to live on while the sun and the moon exist.

This has been taught for the successful practice of Yoga by the Yogee Agasta, and all the Yogees agree in declaring this as the best method of abstraction. He frees himself from the greatest of all diseases, this miserble world, who, having drawn the breath, is able to fix it on both sides of the *Kundalini*, mentally repeating the holy word OM all the while. He who having drawn the breath is able to fix it in the cavity of the heart realises ATMAN at no great distance in time. What can disease do to him

who thus practise abstraction internally as well externally after having filled the belly with air drawn in by the nose. He, who having fixed the air at the middle of the eye-brows and at the back of the chest, contemplates upon it with steadiness, reaches the condition of the Absolute. There is no dispute on this subject”.

The *Yoga* of the *Yogees* and the *Sadhanas* of the *Tantrikas* will be thus found to be the same SELF-CULTURE practised only in different ways; but the main feature of both is the same. There are hundreds of ways of *Yoga* and *Tantrika Sadhanas*—which make men supernaturally mighty and powerful and finally take them to the ETERNAL BLISS.

“Saivism represents the old traditional and parent religion of the days of the Vedas and Upanishads, Agmas or Tantras and Itihasas and Puranas and bases its authority on these ancient Revealed books and histories. It claims God Siya to be the author of the Vedas and Agamas.”

Siva Adaitwa Sidhanta Philosophy by J. M. N. Pelly, B. A., B. L.

“We see no difference between the Veda and Sivagama. Even the Vedas may properly be called Sivagama, Siva being the author thereof. Accordingly Sivagama is two fold, one being intended for the three higher castes, the other being intended for all. The Vedas are intended for people of three castes and the other for all. Siva alone is the author of the Veda is declared in the following passages of Sruti and Smriti.

He is the Lord of all Vidyas.

The Veda is the breath of the Mighty being.

Of these eighteen Vidyas of various paths, the original author is the wise Sulapani himself—so says the Sruti.”

Nilkantha Sivacharya in his Sutra Vasya.

VOL. II.
PART II
CHAPTER. I

Tirthas.

One of the most important religious functions of a Hindu's life is to visit different *Tirthas* and perform all the necessary ceremonies as ordained to be performed in those holy places. There are some places very sacred to the worshippers of Siva and there are some others which are highly sacred and holy to the *Saktas*, the worshippers of Sakti. There are some places again which are sacred to the adorers of Vishnu and other Gods,—but to an ordinary Hindu as well as one who has risen above all secterianism and differences,—all *Thirthas* are considered as equally holy and sacred to Siva, Vishnu, Sakti or any other Gods and Goddesses, * without any distinction.

* We shall give here the Shastric versions of these holy places and then we shall give full descriptions of all the Hindu holy places and shrines. We shall humbly make an attempt to tell our readers the esoteric and exoteric meaning of the Tirthas as we proceed.

There are numerous Sanskrit works that describe the glories of the various Hindu Shrines. They are known as the *Khandas* and the *Mahatmas*, and they are attached to different *Puranas*. * These works describe various legends to show why such and such places have become sacred and holy. We shall quote a chapter from the *Agni Purana*. †

Agni said:—There are many *Tirthas*;—amongst them *Gya* is the best and the holiest. I shall now sing its glory;—listen to it. There was an *Asura*,—named *Gyasura*,—who engaged himself in such deep and austere *Tapasaya* ‡ that the celestials grew frightened. They then went to Narayana who was lying in the ocean of milk. They all prayed, “O Lord save us from *Gyasura*.”

The great Lord Narayana was moved, and he went to the Asura and said, “I am pleased with thee. Ask from me a boon. The Asura replied;—I want to be the most sacred and holy of all *Tirthas*.” “Very well, I grant thy prayer,” and the Lord disappeared. The celestials then could not see the great Lord, nor the great Asura,—the earth remained vacant.

The celestials again went to Narayana and said, “Since you saw the *Daitya*, the earth remained

* The *Kashi Khanda* speaks of Kashi, modern Benares. The *Utkal Khanda* describes the great temple of Jagannath at Puri,—*Gya Mahatma* sings the glory of Gaya and so on.

† This is a translation from the *Agni Purana*, Chapter 114.

‡ *Tapasaya* is the practice of hard austerities.

vacant." Narayana replied to Brahma who came at the head of the celestials, "Go back and prepare to perform a great *Yagma* and ask the Daitya to give you his body. The celestials did as they were bid. They went to the Asura asked his body. The great Daitya said, "Be it so." and immediately his head fell down.

Brahma performed the Yagma and prepared to pour libations on the body of the Daitya, but it began to move away. Brahma went back to Narayana and told him what had happened. The great God said, "Put on the Daitya's body a celestial stone. Sit all of you on it and I shall also sit on it, by assuming the form of *Gadadhara*." Now this is the story of the celestial stone.

Dharma had a daughter by his wife *Dharmabati*, who was named *Dharmavrata*. The great Rishi *Marichi* married the highly ascetic *Dharmavrata* and he became as happy as Vishnu with Lakshmi and Siva with Gouri.

One day the Rishi felt much fatigued on account of his great labour in collecting fuels for cooking and fruits and roots for eating. He returned home and lay down in his bed and asked his wife to shampoo his feet. The ever devoted wife *Dharmavrata* began to shampoo her husband's feet. At this very time Brahma came to that place. On seeing him, she thought, "Whether I shall continue to shampoo my husband's feet or shall I worship Brahma? The great

God is the preceptor of my preceptor, therefore I should worship him."

She left her husband and worshipped the great God. But her husband grew offended and cursed her thus, "Thou shalt be turned into a stone." And she became a piece of stone. But she began to practise great austerities. The Celestials were much pleased with her and asked her to ask for a boon. *Dharmavrata* said, "Let my husband's curse be undone" The Celestials said, "That is impossible. Great Rishi Marichi's words can never be false." Then *Dharmavrata* thus spoke, "If you are pleased with me, then sit on me all the celestials, with Brahma Vishnu, Siva, Sakti and others and make this stone the holiest of the holy in this world." The Gods said, "Be it so."

This celestial stone was then placed on the body of *Gyasura* but still it moved on and on. All the Celestials then sat upon it, but still it moved on and on. Then came Narayana in the form of Gadadhara and sat upon the stone and it then became stationary.

The poor *Asura* then said, "Why have you done this? I would have become stationary, if you asked me to be so. Now give me some boon."

The Gods said, "We have made you stationary, because we want to make you the holiest of all holy *Tirthas*. Here will always dwell Brahma, Vishnu and Siva and here will come all *Tirthas*. And this is the

will be the means of sending one's deceased fathers and ancestors to the abode of Brahma."

We need not quote any other story,—one will be sufficient to give an idea of them to our readers.

We shall further quote a few passages from the Puranas.

"I shall now sing the glory of all the Tirthas. They bestow on man both enjoyments and Emancipation. He whose hand, feet and mind are always under complete control and he who is learned, an ascetic, and famous,—such a man only derives the beneficial results of visiting the wholly places. He who does not accept any gifts or alms, he who eats only that which is lawfully obtained,—whose senses are under complete control and who is absolutely sinless, obtains all the fruits of performing Yagmas by visiting the *Tirthas*. Because a man does not fast for three nights, and has not visited the *Tirthas*, he is born in poverty. That which is obtained by the performance of the Yagmas is also obtained by visiting the *Tirthas* *

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* In the next chapter we shall quote a few passages from the Puranas which speak of the *Tirthas*,—so our readers might have a fair idea of the Tirthas as described by the Shastras.

CHAPTER II.

The Pouranika Tirthas.

The Agni Purana writes :—^f'*Puskara* is the best and the holiest of all *Tirthas*. There dwell ten *Koti* thousand *Tirthas*. Brahma with the Celestials and the Rishis who desire to go to heaven always dwell there. The Celestials obtained their final success at this great *Tirtha*. If one, after bathing in this holy *Tirtha*, performs the *Pujas* of his dead ancestors and of the Gods, he obtains the final success (*Siddhi*) and also the fruits that are obtained by the performance of the Horse-Sacrifice. He goes finally to the abode of Brahma.

It is very difficult to go to *Puskara*,—it is very difficult to perform austerities at *Puskara*,—it is very difficult to live at *Puskara*. If one dwells there, meditates there, performs *Sradh* ceremonies of his dead parents there, if he worships the Gods there,—then hundred generations of his will go to heaven.

In this *Puskara* there are two other *Tirthas*, named *Jambumarga* and *Tandulakasrama*.

The other excellent *Tirthas* that should be visited are the following :—

Karnasrama,—*Koti Tirtha*,—*Narmada*,—*Arbuda*,—*Charmawati*,—*Sindhu*,—*Somnatha*,—*Pravasha*,—*Saraswati*,—*Sagarasangama*,—*Sagar Tirtha*,—*Pindaraka*,—*Dwaraka*,—*Gomoti*,—*Vumi Tirtha*,—*Girindra*,—*Papnashini*,—*Devika*,—*Brahmatunga*,—*Panchanada*—*Kumarotose*. * .

If a man always says, "I shall go to *Kurukshetra*, shall live at *Kurukshetra*," he becomes cleansed of all his sins. He becomes pure and goes to heaven. In this *Kurushkhetra*, Vishnu and other Gods always dwell. Therefore if one dwells here, he obtains *Narayana* at the end. The holiest of holy river *Saraswati* flows here. If one bathes in this river, he goes to the abode of Brahma. Even the dusts of *Kurushkhetra* bestows Eternal Heaven to all.

After visiting *Kurukshetra*, one must go *Dharma Tirtha*, *Subarna Tirtha*, *Ganga Dwara Tirtha*, and *Kanakaloti Tirtha*.

After this if one bathes with proper ceremonies at the *Ganges* and the confluence of the *Saraswati*, at *Brahmavarta*, *Vrighutunga*, *Kubjamara*, *Gingod Veda*, *Baranashi*, *Prayaga*, *Gomoti*, &c., he obtains heaven.

After this, one should visit *Rajgriha*, *Salagram*, *Batasha*, *Bamana*, *Kalikasangam*, *Lohitya*, *Korotoya*,

* As we shall elaborately describe the most holy and sacred Hindu *Tirthas* later on,—we shall not describe the places where all these *Tirthas* are situated. We give this translation of the *Puranas* to prepare our readers for what follows in the following chapters.

Sona, Sriparvati, Kolyagiri, Sajha, Malaya, Godavari, Tanguadra, Kaveri, Tapti, Pajasni, Reva, Dandakaranya, Kalanjara, Munjabati, Sarparaka, Mandakini, Chitrakut, Sringavapur, Avanti, Ajodhya and Namisha. If one visits all these *Tirthas*, one obtains both enjoyment and Emancipation.

I shall now tell you the glory of the Ganges. He who worships the auspicious Vagithi (Ganges) obtains both enjoyments and Emancipation. The country through which the Ganges flows becomes holy and auspicious. Those that always desire to find out the means of *Mukti* obtain it by taking the protection of the holy Ganges. If one worships the Ganges, his both generations,—his paternal and maternal,—obtain heaven. To drink the water of the Ganges is thousand times better than to perform one thousand *Chandrayana Vratas*. If one sees and bathes in the Ganges for one month only, he obtains the fruits of all the *Yagmas*. So long one's bones remain in the Ganges, so long he dwells in heaven. If the most fallen and degraded men worship the Ganges, they are placed in the abodes of the Celestials. He who puts the earth from the Ganges on his body, has all his sins destroyed. To see the Ganges, to touch the Ganges, to sing the name of the Ganges and to remember the Ganges send his thousand generations upwards to heaven.

I shall now describe the glory of *Prayaga*. In *Prayaga* dwell Brahma, Vishnu, and Indra and other

Celestials, also rivers and oceans, the successful ones, the Gandharvas, the Apsaras and Keennaras. There are three fiery springs;—in them dwell the holy Ganges. All the Vedas and all the *Yagnas* dwell here in their living forms. If adorations to Prayaga are recited, if its name is sung,—even if its earth is rubbed over the body, all sins are destroyed and all virtues are obtained. Whatever gifts are made, whatever *Sradhya* is performed, whatever worships are done at the confluence of the Ganges and the Jamuna at Prayaga, become eternal and ever-lasting. No one should ever abandon the idea of dying at this great holy place. Sixty *Kotis* and ten thousand *Tirthas* dwell at Prayaga. Therefore Prayaga is the highest *Tirtha*. The learned men say that the fruits that are obtained by bathing only three days in the Prayaga can not be obtained by giving away many millions of cows. The Ganges is always accessible every where,—but she is hard to be obtained at the *Gangadara* (*Gongotri*), at Prayaga and at Gangasagara (where she falls into the sea). If one makes gifts at Prayaga, he goes to heaven and is born as a God in his next birth. If one dies at the foot of the Banian tree here, he goes to the abode of Vishnu.

Now Mahadeva (Siva) himself told Gouri that Baranashi is the best of all *Tirthas*. If one lives here and meditates on and sings the name of God, he obtains both enjoyment and Emancipation. Siva said, "I never leave this holy place,—Therefore it is called

Never-out. If one performs *Tapa*, *Japa*, *Homa*, and *Dana* here,—they become eternal.” *

If your body is cut into pieces, still live at Baranashi,—do not leave it. The following eight great *Tirthas* always dwell in Baranashi,—namely highly sacred *Harishchandra*, highly sacred *Amratakashwara*, highly blessed *Japashwara*, highly sacred *Sripurvata*, highly sacred *Mahalaya*, highly sacred *Chandashwara*, and *Vrign* and highly blessed *Kadara*. Kashi is the most blessed of all the blessed places. Because it is situated between the two rivers, *Varuna* and *Ashi*, therefore it is called Baranashi. If one bathes here, makes gifts here, if one worships the Gods here and if one dies here, he obtains both enjoyment and Eman-
cipation.”

• We shall now quote a chapter from the Linga Purana.

The great God Siva said, “O Goddess, this my Baranashi city is highly holy. Here men with the senses under control and their souls united with Brahman practise austerities,—with the object of coming to my abode. In this place, my devotees by fully engrossing their minds and actions in me obtain such *Moksha* as nowhere to be got. O Goddess, if any beings die here, they certainly obtain salvation. My this excellent city is very sacred. Brahma and the

• *Tapa*, is meditation, *Japa* is the recitation of God's name *Homa* is Sacrifices, and *Dana* is gifts.

Emancipated beings know this secret place, therefore this city is very sacred and holy and it is my best seat. Because I never left this place, and will never leave it, therefore it is called *Abhinukta* (never-without). Man does not obtain Moksha by bathing and worshipping at *Pushkara*, *Gangadwara*, *Kurushkhetra* and *Nainasharanna*,—but he gets Moksha here, therefore it is far more holy than the above mentioned Tirthas. Moksha is obtained at Prayaga and Moksha is obtained also here. But this Baranashi is far superior even to Prayaga. *Truth* is the *Upanishad* of *Dharma*, *Sam* (Self-control) is the *Upanishad* of *Moksha*,—this Baranashi is the *Upanishad* of all *Tirthas*.

The obtaining of the sovereignty of thousand Indras is nothing in comparism to dying in this holy city. It is better to be a goblin in Kashi than to be Indra in heaven. If one always meditates upon me, then the fire of his Yoga is hundredfold kindled and *Kaibalya* (Salvation) which is not obtained even by the Gods is obtained by him.

The celestial Rishis with Brahma, Vishnu, the Sun, the king of the Gods Indra, all are adoring and worshipping me here. The Yogees with concentrated minds are adoring and worshipping me here. Even the most worldly men,—men that never think of religion, if they die here, will not again take birth in the world. That which cannot be obtained by the Yogees in their thousands of births is obtained by men here by my favour."

In this strain all the Puranas have described the different *Tirthas*, and as we have already said, they have narrated innumerable legends and stories to glorify them. They have been told in many cases to point out the origin of these *Tirthas*,—but generally they are not authenticated, but were told out of the imagination of their authors. We shall make an humble attempt to find out the original history of the Hindu *Tirthas* in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III.

The History of the Tirthas.

Tirtha originally meant *water*, thence holy water,—holy rivers, —thence all holy places, shrines, temples and pilgrimages. There was no *Tirthas* or holy places, as they are understood now, at the time of the Vedic Aryas, but in the very early times the places where great *Yagnas* were performed grew to be some sort of holy places. Then at the time of the *Brhmanas* and the *Upanishads*,—the places,—generally forests,—where vastly learned men lived, became holy places ;—such a place was *Naimisharanna*. * Then again even from the time of the *Rig Veda*,—the river *Saraswati* was considered very holy and sacred by the early Aryans. Water was the most valued thing in the deserts of the arid Punjab and it is quite natural that the *Saraswati* that flowed through these deserts should be considered as very holy by all the people of the country of the five

* *Naimisharanya* was even to-day a greatly sacred place of pilgrimage. The *Puranas* have variously sang its glory. The *Mahabharata* was recited by Souti here before the assembly of the *Rishis*. It stands somewhere near Hordoi, a District in the United Provinces.

ivers. There was another reason of its being considered as very holy. The great Rishis,—the great philosophers,—all the vastly learned men,—men with extraordinary powers,—used to live on the banks of this river. It is no wonder that such a river should rise to the highest veneration of the people.

This is the origin of the *Tirthas* or the holy places of the Aryas. When they extended lower down the country,—they came to the banks of the mighty Ganges;—and it is quite natural that they should deify her,—worship and adore her and consider her to be a very holy and sacred river. The Aryas on the both banks of the Ganges grew to be very mighty and powerful;—so along with them their favourite river also rose to the highest pinnacle of respect and veneration. *

We need not say, the Aryas as they migrated in different directions to the various parts of India, they met with many mighty rivers; and as they brought with them the veneration for the holy Saraswati and the Ganges,—they placed their veneration on the rivers of their new homes. Thus the Narmada, the Godavery, the Kavery and other rivers became one after the other the holy *Tirthas*. To bathe in them and to adore and

* We need not perhaps narrate the innumerable legends that have been told about the mother Ganges in almost all the Puranas. They are not necessary.

worship them were considered to bestow health, wealth, virtue and final salvation.

Naimisharanya was a holy place at the time of the Brahmanas and the Upanishads. So in course of time became Benares,—where dwelt many learned men and Rishis, and so became many other places, they being seats of learning and holiness. The best spiritual men of the country congregated in these places ; the highest spiritual culture emanated from them ;—and if Science is to be believed, it must be said that these places were made holy by the holiness of thousands of the holiest men. Men and women came to these places from the furthest corners of the Aryan land and considered themselves blessed if they could live there even for three nights. Is it not natural that people should be attached to the places, which were the centres of all holiness, all spirituality, all culture and learning and knowledge ? Were not these places great helps in their culture for religious-education, in their piety, purity and holiness ?

Such was the origin of the Hindu *Tirthas*, and when the Vedic religion was replaced by the religion of the Puranas, these *Tirthas* were also sanctified and many more *Tirthas* were added.

Is there, however, any utility in visiting these *Tirthas* ? Can they really cleanse our sins,—can they really make us pure and holy ? In answer to such questions, we can fairly ask in reply—why not ?

Association makes a man—is an axiomatic truth. If this is true,—at least on this assumption, the Hindu Rishis enjoined the visiting of the holy places. The *Tirthas* are full of holiness,—because it is hallowed by the glorious name of holy and spiritual men. Their spirituality, their purity, their holiness have been ingrained into the very dust of these places. If “association makes a man” be a true maxim,—then what could be a greater association with virtue, spirituality, and holiness than to come to these holy places? A man or a woman is bound to be holy and pure and spiritual if he or she associates with holiness, spirituality, virtue and purity.

This is why the visiting of *Tirthas*,—associating with holy, spiritual and learned men and to perform religious ceremonies in these places have become a part of a Hindu's religion. It is a step in the right direction. It is a means for acquiring holiness and purity,—it is a school for self culture. As the worshipping and adoring the *Emblems* and *Forms* of the Gods and Goddesses are the means of raising oneself in the scale of religious culture, so is the visiting of holy *Tirthas*. They are all education for the final Degree,—which is *Moksha*. No Hindu, therefore, can forsake his holy and sacred *Tirthas*,—they, as the *Puranas* say, bestow on all both *Enjoyment* and *Emancipation*.

Worshipping of the *Emblems* and the *Forms* of the Gods and the Goddesses and visiting the holy places are therefore the means by which men so train,

educate and culture their mind and heart that they are raised to a high plane of spirituality and purity. And from this high plane of spirituality and purity, it would be easy for them to rise to higher planes, till they reach the final goal,—which is ETERNAL FELICITY.

It is not possible to tell the histories of all the holy Hindu shrines and sacred places ;—it is a much disputed subject. For example,—some say that the great temple of Jagannatha at Puri was originally a Buddhist temple, but it was turned into a Hindu temple when Buddhism was merged into Hinduism in India. Some again say that it was originally a Hindu temple, but the Buddhists appropriated it and converted it into a temple of their religion. Thus is the case with many others. Therefore we need not enter into these controversies,—for they have no utility. Whether they were originally Hindu temples or the Buddhist temples,—it is immaterial,—they are holy places,—that is all. Therefore they are to be visited by all Hindus in order to gain “both Enjoyment and Emancipation,” as the Puranas repeatedly declare.

CHAPTER IV.

Exoteric Tirthas.

As is the case in worshipping Emblems and Images, so is the case with the *Tirthas*. The Hindus consider them in two ways, namely exoteric and esoteric. The exoteric is the general performances of various ceremonies when a Hindu visits a *Tirtha*; the esoteric is their higher meaning. The various *Tirthas* have their various religious ceremonies, but we have no space to mention them all here,—but we shall give an instance, which will give an idea of these ceremonies. Gaya is a non-sectarian *Tirtha*;—it is visited by all the Hindu sects and is considered holy and sacred by all Hindus, whether one is a worshipper of Vishnu, Siva, Sakti and other Gods and Goddesses. Therefore we shall quote from a Purana the descriptions of the ceremonies that are to be performed here.

The Purana writes :—If one wants to go to Gaya, he must perform duly the *Sraddha* ceremony. He must circumbulate the village in ascetic garb.—he must be self-controlled and he must not accept any gifts from any one. As soon as the determination to visit Gaya is formed and as soon as he starts from his home,

a staircase to rise to heaven is formed step by step for his dead ancestors. If a son goes to Gaya, then what is the necessity for acquiring the knowledge of Brahman? To die in *Gogriha*,—to live in Kurushketra, to perform Sradh ceremony at Gaya and to acquire Brahma-knowledge are the means of *Mukti* (Emancipation).

On arriving at Gaya, one must bathe on the first day at *Uttaramanasha*. It is exceedingly holy and sacred. You are to bathe there in order to get long life,—release from diseases,—freedom from all sins and final emancipation. After that, saying “I am worshipping the Gods of the earth, of the sky, of the heaven,” you will perform in due form the *Sradh* ceremony. You will give *Pinda* * to all these Gods. Then you will offer *Pinda* to your father, grandfather, great grandfather, mother, grandmother, great grandmother and other dead ancestors. You will recite then this *Mantra*, “I bow down my head to the Sun who is the Moon, the Earth, the Vuda (Mars), the Vrihaspati (Jupiter), the Sukra (Venus), the Sani (Saturn), and *Rahu* and *Ketu*.” If one bathes in *Uttaramanasha* and performs the *Sradh* ceremony here by offering *Pindas* to the Gods and the dead *Pitris*, then all his ancestors go to heaven.

* *Pinda* can be made of anything according to the worldly position of the giver. It is generally made of unboiled rice and ripe plantain mixed together and made into a ball. *Pinda* literally means a ball.

After this you must go in strict silence to *Dakṣiṇmanasha* and bathe there and perform the *Pinda* ceremony. You must thus pray :—"I have come to Gaya, and I am bathing in Dakṣiṇmanasha in order to please the *Pitris*. Let all my ancestors go to heaven. I bow down my head to the Siva, the Lord of all. O lord, do my good and bestow enjoyment and Emancipation to my dead ancestors. Kavyavalanala, Soma, Yama, Aryama, and Agniswatta,—ye are the Gods of the *Pitris*. Being protected by you, let all my ancestors come here. I desire to offer them *Pindas*."

There is a world renowned Tirtha named *Kankal* ever adored by the celestial Rishis, situated on the north of Mundaprista. It is protected by many Gods dreadful to the sinners. If one bathes in it, he obtains heaven and acquires much worldly wealth. From this place you must go to the river *Valga*. This is known by the name of *Gayasira*; it is far superior to Mundaprista &c. If one, after bathing in it, sees *Gadadhara*, there is no knowing what he does not become. All the *Tirthas* of the world from sea to sea, within the 24 hours of the day, once come to this great Tirtha. If one bathes in it with faith and reverence, his ancestors obtain the abode of Brahman; and he acquires enjoyment and Emancipation for himself. You will have to bathe here, and to perform the *Sradh* and offer *Pindas*. You will bow down to the Grandsire of the Universe and thus pray :—"The auspicious Gadadhara and the Grandsire exist here .

in the form of Lingum. I bow down my head to that great God of all Gods. I bow down my head to Gadadhara, Valarama, Kama, Aniruddha, Narayana, Brahma, Vishnu, Nrisinha, Vairaba and others."

You must on the second day go to the *Dharmaraya*. Here in the *Asrama* * of the greatly ascetic Malainga is a pond named after him. You will bathe in this pond in due form and perform the *Sradh* ceremony. You will bow down at the feet of the Siva of this place called *Matangarh*; you will then speak thus:—Let all the Gods be my witness,—I release all my ancestors from the bonds of earth by coming to this Matanga *Asrama*.

Then you will bathe in the tank called *Brahmakupa* and perform the *Sradh* ceremony there. If one bathes in this tank, his hundred generations go to heaven. If one bows down before the great *Mohabodh* tree here, he becomes virtuous and becomes fit for going to heaven.

On the third day, being self controlled, you will bathe in the *Brahmasara*. You will say, "I bathe in this Brahmasara so that I shall attain to the Entity of Brahman." You will then perform the *Sradh* and offer the *Pindas* in order to secure for your ancestors the abode of Brahman. You will then circumbulate this tank.

* *Asrama* is the abode of ascetics. They were generally situated in the deep forests,—but sometimes ascetics used to live at the outskirts of a village or town.

On the fourth day, you will bathe in the Falgu which is a great *Tirtha*. You will here worship the Gods and offer *Pindas* at this *Gayasura*. The area of Gaya is ten miles and that of *Gayasura* is two miles. Any one who offers *Pindas* within these areas secures release of his hundred generations.

You will recite this Mantra in offering the *Pindas* :—I offer these *Pindas* to all who are dead—whether of my paternal or maternal family or of the families of my preceptor, of my father-in-law and of my friends, or who being of my family have none to offer them *Pindas*, who had no wife, no children, who were born blind, crippled, or deformed. I offer *Pindas* to all of my family whom I know or do not know,—I offer these *Pindas* for their salvation.”

This might be termed the exoteric side of the *Hindu Tirthas*. In every *Tirtha*, one is enjoined to bathe with faith and reverence, to worship the Gods,—to perform the Sradh ceremony and to offer *Pindas* to the *Pitris*, so that they might obtain heaven and to pray for one's own Salvation and worldly benefits. In addition to this, one is enjoined to associate with the *Sadhus* who always congregate in the *Tirthas*. What could be a greater religious culture than this? It cannot be said that to visit the *Tirthas* is mere superstition,—there is absolutely no benefit to be derived from them. To visit a distant place is education itself;—it is a great change, beneficial both to mind and body. The *Tirthas*, being highly religious places, full of men

highly religious and spiritual, it is also a great field for religious education. Then to bathe, then to worship God, to offer Bindas to the Pitris,—are these not great help for one's religious culture? If the Hindus have become so religious and so spiritual, it is due to their *Tirthas* and their *Images* and *Emblems* of Gods and Goddesses.

We should mention here that in the matter of the *Tirthas*, the Hindus have no sectarianism. The worshippers of Vishnu and the worshippers of Siva oftentimes came to blows,—but the *Tirthas* were and still are regarded equally holy and sacred by them all. The worshippers of Siva, those of Vishnu, and those of Sakti all visit the chief *Tirthas* and bathe and worship in them, side by side.

We might mention that those that rose to the highest spiritualism,—those that attained to Brahma-Jnana,—even they too always visited the *Tirthas*, and if there is any thing in *Association*,—these places have been highly sanctified by the spiritualism and *Brahma-Jnana* and heavenly presence of these great men.

If such places cannot raise the ignorant masses to a higher plane of spirituality,—nothing else can.

CHAPTER V.

Esoteric Tirthas.

We have already said that every Hindu *Tirtha* has a higher esoteric meaning. We need not say any thing ourselves,—a very gifted lady of our country, Mrs. Fulkumari Gupta, has written an able article on one of the most celebrated of the Hindu Tirthas, namely *Purushatwama*. We shall give its translation below.

“As all the rivers, hills, lakes, mountains and countries are drawn in a small piece of paper and is called the Map of the world, so in this human body, made of flesh and blood, and in the brain of man which is the most important link of that body,—the whole Universe has been painted in the smallest scale. Either by *Sadhana* or by the fruits of the good deeds of the previous births,—when a man rises to the plane of internal perception, when all the darkness of his mind is removed,—he then at once remembers all the incidents of his previous births. All his external senses rush inwards, and thus he gets the preception of the whole Universe and understands the mysterie

of creation, although he lives in his this mortal body. He then perceives the Universe in him and perceives his Ego, which is separate from this Universe, as Brahman, the Supreme One.

There are various forces in the various places of the Universe,—so are there different forces in the different parts of the human body. The wise men have given different names to different parts of this Universe, and they called them *Svaloka*, *Vuloka*, *Goloka*, &c, so do the wise men, learned in the ways of life, and of the human body,—have given different names to different internal parts of it.

It is said that the Universe is made of seven or fourteen *Lokas* (worlds),—so is it also said that the human body contains seven or fourteen different *Lokas*,—worlds. That which exists in certain parts of the Universe also exists in the same parts of the human body. There are places in the worlds from which the rivers have risen or where they have joined together, and there are certain spiritual forces working in those places. The learned men called them different *Tirthas*. In the human body also such places are called *Tirthas*. If on certain day or time or moment, one's mind by some means or other can approach these *Tirthas* of the human body, - then he rises to a higher plane of spirituality and can separate himself from his worldly environments. For this reason, the learned men have enjoined that the *Tirthas*, i. e, the

holy and sacred places of the world,—should be visited in *Yoga* and *Yaga*. *

* *Yoga* is the conjunction of two or three *Tithis*. The *Tithis* are created by the different constellations. Every Hindu knows what is known by the *Tithis*. We refer our non Hindu readers to the Hindu Astrology.

Yaga is a certain day, month or moment.*

We think we should make the meaning of the writer more clear. She says,—the human body is Universe itself—it has its some peculiar places. If we can take our mind to these places on certain time,—we rise to a higher plane. As much as we shall be able to go inside of ourselves, so much shall we approach to our real existence. When we shall thus come to the end,—we shall find that the whole Universe is but our body and I myself is Brahman.

These peculiar places of the human body are called the *Tirthas*,—so the learned men have called certain peculiar places of the world as *Tirthas*. As the *Tirthas* in the human body raise us to a higher plane,—so do the *Tirthas* of the world lead us to the path of religion. They are exactly the counterparts of the human body. Each has its esoteric signification.

A Hindu *Tirtha* and its various temples, tanks &c. have not been created at haphazard, and they are not meaningless superstition. They have deep significations.

At certain time, at certain day, and at certain month, human minds become more favourable to receive spiritual and religious fervour than at other times. Its cause is also to be found in the mysteries of the human mind. Those that are learned in them know all about them,—it is not possible for others to know them. For this reason, certain time, day and month are more favourable for visiting the *Tirthas* than other times.

Whatever is to be found in the Universe is also to be found in India. She is the embodiment of the whole earth;—therefore every thing of the human body are to be found also in India. She is described as the human body,—with the mount Himalayas as its head. The three chief rivers of India represent three important *Nerve Currents* of the human body, namely *Ida*, *Pingala* and *Susanna*. The place in the body from which *Ida*, *Pingala*, and *Susanna* go in three different directions is called *Kashi*, and the place in which they have joined together is called *Jukta-veni* or *Prayaga*. In India, where the chief rivers have united together is called *Prayaga Tirtha*, the place from which they go in different directions is called *Kashi*,—Benares. *

Puri Khetra is a *Tirtha* which is altogether a different and peculiar *Tirtha*. As the whole body is made,—as the whole *Brahma* city is made,—so is made the *Puri Khetra*. The wise men say that there

We cannot in this work enter into these controversial matters. There is no space for them here. Whatever they are, these *Tirthas* are holy places, and they lead us to religion and spirituality.

* Thus can every Hindu *Tirthas* be compared with the different parts of the human body. It is not the scope of this work to point them out. We mention them simply to show that every Hindu *Tirtha* has an esoteric meaning. Our writer explains one of them, namely *Purushatwama*,—which we quote above.

are seven *Chakras* (nerve-centres) in the human body. * They call them by the name of *Lokas*. These seven *Lokas* are made of the seven entities of the seven different *Lokas*. As Puri is built after the human body,—there are seven different *Tirthas* in this place. The first *Chakra* of the body is *Muladhara*,—so is found *Chakra Tirtha* at the very gate of Puri.

This *Muladhara* is the vital power of the body. It is kept up by the inhalation and exhalation of the air. In this *Chakra Tirtha* at Puri, Hanuman, (the Monkey God) stands as the emblem of breathing. He whose vital power becomes steady in *Muladhara* has no fear to be destroyed by time. There are, at the two gates of the city of the human body, two centres called *Muladhara* and *Brahmapura*,—so are there two *Tirthas* at the very gates of Puri. These two *Tirthas* are called *Chakra Tirtha* and *Sangadara*. *Muladhara* and *Brahmapura* are the centres in which the breathing is controlled, therefore here at Puri are found two Hanumanas bound in iron chains.

In that body in which *Prana* is united with *Apana*,—*Atma* is united with *Paramatma*. In such a man the ocean of the world, full of mountainous waves,

* In previous chapters we have fully described *Muladhara*, *Kundalini*, *Prana* and *Apana* &c. Therefore we hope it will not be difficult for our readers to follow our gifted authoress. We shall however explain her meaning as we proceed.

with fearful animals in the shape of wrath, lust and desire, though wildly rage, could bring in no change. That man has no decay,—no deterioration,—no death.

Puri Tirtha is exactly the same. It is washed by the fearful waves of the sea—but it is always steady and undecaying.

All visitors to Puri first bathe in the *Chakra Tirtha*; then they perform the *Deva Yagma* (Worshipping Gods) and the *Pitri Yagma* (performing Sradhas) and thus become purified; and then they go to see the Jagannatha, the great God in the Puri temple.

It is said that a man sees the great God in that light and form in which temperament he enters the great temple. It is known that unless a Yogee can destroy all his desires, all his impressions, all his entities,—he can never be united with the great Soul, so a man who cannot get rid of his worldly desires and impressions, can never see Jagannatha, the Lord of the Universe. Therefore every visitor to Puri is enjoined to be pure and holy at the *Sargadara* before he enters the great temple of Puri.

This temple is the conjunction of the three great entities of the Hindu religion,—namely *Satwa*, *Raja*, and *Tama*, and it is also the centre of these three combined which is called *Turio*. The Image of Balarama is white in colour, full of knowledge,—the centre of Satwa Guna which is infinite.

Jagannatha is the Image of Brahman himself,—he is reddish in colour which is the colour of *Raja Guna*, that bestower of eternal wealth.

Suvadra is the Image of *Maya*—she is of yellow colour—the fourth is the *Turiya* itself—the Eternal perception of God, which is Eternal Ecstasy and Bliss. The place in which the four cardinal points of religion have been so grandly represented is undoubtedly a great place. What place could be greater? Therefore there is no distinction of caste and creed in the *Puri-Dhama*. Where is no *Vikara*,—there could be no restrictions. So long man cannot pass the *Sargadara*, so long is he under restrictions. As soon as he crosses it,—he becomes free and all worldly distinctions and restrictions disappear. Thus he who passes the *Sargadara Tirtha* of Puri, and enters the great temple has no caste, no creed. Before God all is of one caste.

Suvadra is the great *Mohat*,—the great Mahat-tatwa,—therefore she stands between Jagannatha and Balarama,—between KNOWLEDGE and ACTIONS. Jagannatha is *Karma Yoga* and Balarama is *Jnana Yoga*. Whether it is *Jnana* (knowledge) or *Vakti* (devotion) none can approach HIM without taking the help of great mother *Prakriti*. Therefore the great sister *Suvadra* stands between the two great brothers.

No one can attain to Yoga unless he controls his *Prana*.—The world is like a sea,—it must be brought under subjugation if one desires to rise to the Supreme. Therefore it is found that there are two figures of

Hanumana at Puri who are supposed to control the sea.

The sea at Puri is the worldly life,—Hanumana is Prana, Yama, and Suvadra is pure Mahatatwa,—the great Prakriti. The Shastras describe two manifestations of Maya,—one is gross,—the other is subtile. That which is externally visible is gross and is called *Avidya*, and that which is subtile and can not be externally seen is called Maya or Mahatatwa. The gross *Avidya* is always attracting the subtile Maya.—The world is always attracting Maya to take her away, thus the story has been promulgated that the sea attempted to abduct Suvadra.

Suvadra is the subtile Maya,—Maya that could be perceived by the Soul only. If you want to catch Purusha,—you cannot do it without the help of Maya. If you want to know your father, you must know it through your mother. If you want to know Purusha,—your great father,—you must know HIM through your great mother Prakriti. Therefore the *Yogees* first know Prakriti and know through her Purusha. They thus first try to understand *Mrinmayi* Prakriti (made of clay figures),—then they try to know *Chinmayi* Prakriti (she who is only to be known by the Soul).

The story is told that the sea attempted to abduct Suvadra and out of fear, she took shelter between her two brothers and both Jagannatha and Balarama were so frightened that they withdrew their hands and feet into their belly. The story has deep significations.

It means that for the attraction of Avidya, Pususha stands as if dumb—he is action-less,—therefore he has no hands and no feet,—he stands only as a on-looker,—he has only his great • brilliant eye to see. Therefore we find a large diamond on the forehead of Jagannatha flashing brilliancy and light all around.” *

Such is the esoteric side of the Hindu Tirthas. They have higher significations for those who have eyes to see them,—but to all others, they are the great culture grounds for human Souls.

* This article of the gifted lady was published in the Bengali monthly called *Jamuna*, dated the 1st Vaisaka, 1316, B. S.

CHAPTER VI.

The Historical Grounds.

Before we enter into the descriptions of the different Hindu Tirthas, we should make a few general remarks. These Tirthas did not all at once come to be the holy places of the Hindus ;—they were not made holy and sacred by one stroke of the pen ;—they, one after the other, grew to be considered holy and sacred in course of many thousands of years and for various reasons and causes.

We have already mentioned how the Ganges and the other rivers came to be considered as *Tirthas* after the old Aryan river *Saraswati*. We believe Kurukshetra became a famous *Tirtha* after the great battle of the Kuru-Pandavas, although the Puranas have given it an earlier date. Prayāga must have become a *Tirtha* after the destruction of the Yadu race at this place on the shore of the western seas. It is not possible to definitely fix the time of any of the famous shrines of India,—hardly is there any history ever written about them except the innumerable legends and stories told by the Puranas in their *Mahatma* and *Khanda* portions.

For example, a great controversy has been raging amongst the scholars both of the east and the west

over the famous pilgrimages of Gaya and Puri. These two shrines are the most catholic of all the holy places in India. Here come men and women of all shades, creeds and colours,—without the distinction of any religion whatsoever. Every Hindu,—whatever is his religious views and faith, comes to perform the *Sradh* ceremonies of his dead ancestors at Gaya. In Puri,—catholicism has gone further. Here there is no caste distinction at all. A Brahman,—the highest and the holiest of all castes,—does take here food,—cooked food,—from the hand of the lowest of low Chandalas,—the most degraded and the most hated caste of India.

Some scholars assert that both of these great shrines,—though now Hindu, was originally Buddhist shrines. In the temple at Puri, there is an inscription which gives it an early date,—not later than the tenth century, but from this no one should form an idea of this venerable temple's age. It is possible that the temple that we now see at Puri was built by some big Raja on the site of an older temple. It is certain that the shrine of Puri is of great antiquity. Some scholars say that the three figures at Puri are originally but the three *Crosses* that were the Emblems of the three great objects of worship of all Buddhists,—namely the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha (the association of Monks).—That the supporters of the Hindu view declare that this temple was a Hindu shrine from the earliest days and it was never a Buddhist temple has been already described by us.

Such is exactly the case with Gaya. The Hindus boldly assert that it was a Hindu holy place from the very beginning of the Hindu religion,—but many of the modern scholars say that there was no shrine at Gaya before the day on which the Buddha attained to Nirvana. At least in this case, perhaps they are justified to say so,—for we know from the Buddhist records that near about Gaya—i. e. where the present Buddh-Gya stands, the Buddha came when he renounced his asceticism in disgust. He failed to get what he was eager to get by asceticism. Therefore he came to this place almost starved to death. Here sat he under a Banian tree and a village girl named Sujata brought him back to life by giving him food and water. Under this very tree he attained to Nirvana, and since that day to this day, this Banian Tree has become known by the name Bo-tree and has grown to be one of the greatest pilgrimages of the Buddhists. *

Now there is another reason why we do not find very ancient Hindu temples in India as we do in the

* It is evident from *Lalita Vistara* that Gaya, as a town, existed at so early a date as the youth of Sakya Sinha, at two thousand four hundred years ago. He was invited to the place by certain house-holders, who received him with cordial welcome.

• (*Lalita Vistara*, Page 309). Dr. R. L. Mitra, *Bodh-Gaya*.

Prof. H. H. Wilson supposes the Bodh-Gaya to be the site of ancient Gaya (*Essays II*). The *Lalita Vistara* leaves no room to doubt the existence of the present Gaya as a town long before the commencement of the Christian era, and Bodh-Gaya having been distinct from the town of Gaya.

case of many Buddhist temples. The Buddhists generally preferred secluded life,—therefore they built their monasteries generally on the 'forest' clad hills. They excavated many hills and built wonderful caves. They are never to be destroyed and they will always remain the wonders of the world. But on the other hand,—a Hindu holy place means a place with Sacred water. The Hindus therefore invariably built their temples on the banks of a holy river. And every one of us is aware how shifting all our rivers are. No building can be called even now safe on their banks. In living memory,—they have destroyed many hundreds of fine buildings and temples. It is quite evident therefore that they must have played havoc on many ancient Hindu temples and buildings. Therefore it is no wonder that there will be no ancient Hindu architectures in existence in India at the present day.

These two examples will suffice for the others. Such was the case with many Hindu and Buddhist shrines. And again many were added to them for various reasons, some of which we have already mentioned. Some became famous for their hot springs,—such as Sitakund in Monghyr and some for their wonderful curative powers such as Tarakeshwara near Calcutta.

We believe we have briefly given an idea of what a Hindu means by his holy and sacred places.—We shall now give the description of a few of the most important of the Hindu shrines.

CHAPTER VII.

Tirthas in Bengal.

Calcutta, being the Metropolis of India,— we shall first briefly describe the great *Tirthas* that are to be found in the Presidency of Bengal. They are the following :—

(1) Kalighat, (2) Tarakeshwara, (3) Gangasagara, (4) Baidyanath, (5) Gaya, (6) Kamakhya, (7) Chandranath and (8) Purushatwama. All these are most celebrated Tirthas in India and are visited by millions of men and women from all parts of the country,—whether they are the worshippers of Siva, Sakti, Vishnu and others.

KALIGHAT:—It is a great *Tirtha* of the worshippers of Sakti,—but it is venerated by all Hindus. It is one of the 52 *Pitasthanas*:—toes of the great Goddess having fallen at this place. (Vide previous chapter).

We know very little of its early history, but we know that it was in existence when the English about two hundred and fifty years ago first visited this place and founded their factories in the adjacent villages of Sutanati and Govindapur ; on which site the great city of Calcutta was subsequently built.

When the English came here the place was a vast Jungle and a large marsh. Only a few fishermen and weavers dwelt near about the place. It is quite certain that in this Jungle a small masonry building existed in which the Emblem of the great Goddess was kept. Most probably a figure of Kali was placed in it and a Brahman family called Haldars used to worship the Goddess. We say all this from the fact that the name of Calcutta had been derived from the word *Kali Kota* the *building for Kali*. If there was a *Mandir* (temple), people would not call it *Kali-Kota*, but would have called it *Kali Mandir*.

However the temple was of very early date. The present temple must have been built, if not before the advent of the English, certainly immediately after their settlement in Calcutta. Some have asserted that the temple was built some three hundred years ago.

It stands on the Tolly's Nalla, at present a small creek or branch of the river Hugly. But it was the original holy Bhagirathi or Ganges, now dried up. The Ganges, branching off southward on the north of Murshidabad came down to Calcutta and flowed by this Tolly's Nalla and at last fell into the sea. *Kabikankan* wrote his celebrated work *Chandi* about four hundred years ago, and in it he described the Ganges flowing by this route and not by Buzbuz and Diamond Harbour as at present. He too have mentioned Kalighat. Therefore we can safely trace this temple at least for four or five hundred years ago.

. But we need not say that the temple grew daily richer and more famous as the city of Calcutta grew to be a big city where millions of men came to dwell. It is daily visited by hundreds of people, and as it is a temple of Sakti, thousands of goats are being sacrificed all round the year.

The worship of the Goddess is the ordinary Sakti worship as mentioned in the previous pages, and the descendants of the Haldar family are the custodians of the Goddess which stands as a figure of a Kali,—with one big head and four golden hands attached to a piece of stone. In fact this Image is not worshipped, the Emblem of the toes of the great Goddess is worshipped in due form ;—and it is said that this holy Emblem is kept in a very secret place and no one is to look at it. When it is worshipped, the worshippers keep themselves blindfolded. It is a family belief of the Haldars that if any one ventures to see it, he is bound to turn blind. How far this is true, we do not know, but this is the family tradition of the Haldars.

The greatest festival day of this temple is of course the *Maha-astami* day,—the second day of Durga Puja. But all other auspicious days sacred to the great Goddess Sakti are equally kept here in great festivities and thousands of men and women congregated at the temple and worship and adore the Goddess with all faith and devotion. The rich worship the Goddess by spending thousands of rupees, while the poor get

the equal satisfaction by offering her five pice worth of sweets and fruits.

Nakuleshwari is the Siva of this Sakti,—and his small temple stands at a few yards' distance from her temple. The Emblem of Siva is to be found below a well and the devotees worship him by pouring over him milk, the Ganges water and Bilwa leaves which are sold in plenty all round the temple.

The temple is of complete Bengal architecture with a big round dome over it with the usual Trident placed at its top. It stands on a high pedestal marbled over, but the seat of the Goddess is placed on the very ground much below the pedestal. It has a hall or *Natmandir* in front of it and a suite of rooms on its three sides. These rooms are used as store-room, kitchen &c. We must mention here that everyday the Goddess is offered cooked food of which *Khichiri* is the main dish.

The animals are sacrificed in front of the *Natmandir*, and after the Puja and sacrifice, they are carried away by the worshippers to be enjoyed at home. The place, we need not perhaps mention, is infested with beggars who carry on a roaring trade, for all Hindus become very charitably disposed when they visit a *Tirtha*.

GANGA SAGARA :—This great *Tirtha* is situated at the place where the holy Ganges has fallen into the

sea,—the Bay of Bengal. The story of the Ganges is well known. The dynasty of Sagar was burnt into ashes by the curse of the great Rishi Kapila. They could not ascend to heaven for their this sad death. They could be saved only by the holy water of the Ganges. Many hundred years after this event Bhagiratha brought Ganges from the top of the Himalayas to the place where the sons of king Sagara died. It was on the coast of the Bengal Sea where the irascible Rishi used to dwell. Thus were they able to ascend to heaven and from that day this place had become a greatly holy place.

We need not believe the story if we so please. We have already explained why the Ganges is considered so holy by all the Hindu race, and it is quite natural that where her holy water has mixed with that of the mighty ocean, that place also will be considered very holy and sacred.

This place was a *Tirtha* from the earliest of times. The *Sagara Sangama* is mentioned in many of the Hindu Shastras,—the story of king Sagara and Rishi Kapila is found in the earliest of Hindu records. Perhaps this place was not so full of forests and tigers as it is now. We have distinct traces that many populous places existed in Bengal near about the sea. And we know from the Shastras that hundreds of years ago, pilgrims from the remotest parts of India used to come to *Sagar Sangama* and adore and worship their Gods.

On the 31st *Pousha* of the Bengali month,—in the bitterest cold,—a great fair is held every year on Sagar Island which stands just at the mouth of the Ganges: The Island is washed on all sides by the roaring sea and is a dense forest full of wild animals. But for three days in the year, it is transformed into a great city with innumerable shops and sheds and thousands of men and women congregate and bathe in the sea. The ascetics from the remotest corners of India flock to this holy place and perform their ablutions. For three days it is all bustle and commotion and then it again reverts to its pristine forest mood.

There is a temple of Kapila here with an Image of the Rishi. It is said that the Rishi used to dwell on the very spot on which the temple is built. On these three days the Rishi is worshipped as any other Gods—but afterwards all through the year, he remains neglected,—his companion being fearful tigers and other fearful wild beasts. *

The usual religious ceremony performed here are chiefly bathing, ablutions, *Sradh* &c. The chief function of the pilgrims is to pay a visit to the shrine of Rishi Kapila.

* We must mention here that a fearful custom of throwing children into the sea at *Sagar Sangama* came to be introduced amongst a few Hindus. This is how the highest religion is degraded to the lowest. However this degraded custom was suppressed by Lord Bentinck, Governor-General of India.

TARAKESHWARA :—This holy shrine is the Loardes of India. Our readers perhaps are aware that there is a place in France called Loardes where thousands of pilgrims flock to be cured of their incurable diseases. Such is exactly the case with Tarakeshwara. Thousands of men, women and children from the remotest parts of India visit this place, so that they might be cured of their fell diseases or diseases of their friends and relatives. It is famous for curing all sorts of diseases, and thousands of men and women resort to it every year.

We know not its history. Hardly there is any mention of this shrine in any of the Puranas or Upapuranas. Kalighat is mentioned in the *Tantras*,—the *Sagara Sangama* in many Puranas,—but we have not found Tarakeshwara mentioned in any of them. However the following story is current about this celebrated temple.

In very ancient time, the place where the temple now stands was within an extensive forest known as *Tarakavana*. The cowherd boys of the neighbouring villages came to pasture their kine at the outskirts of the forest and took them back home in the evening. There was a very nice cow amongst these flocks and she belonged to a rich man. She used to give much milk,—milk sweet and juicy,—but for days together her master found that when she returned from the field, there was absolutely no milk in her. He chastised the cowherd boy,—but he said he knew nothing ; but

he was certain, no one had else milked her at all. The master went to the field and watched the cow. He saw that she penetrated into the forest, separating herself from the flock.' The man followed the cow.

She went in and in deep into the deepest part of the forest where she stood on a piece of small stone and down poured from her udders sweet and juicy milk and flowed over it. The man was then thunder-struck with astonishment,—he could make out nothing from the incident.

For three days he watched the cow and for three days he observed the same incident. On the third night he had a dream. In that dream the great God Siva appeared and told him that the piece of stone was one of his ancient Lingums and the man should make all arrangements for its daily worship for which he will be blessed in various ways.

Very next day,—the man cleared the Jungle and began to build a temple over the Lingum, and as he soon became a very wealthy man, he endowed to the temple a large property which now yields an annual income of Rs. 40 to 50 thousands of Rupees. *

This temple still exists,—but it is a far smaller temple than that of Kalighat,—though built in the very same style. It has also a *Natmandir* in front of it,—but all these buildings certainly are of no very long age. But there are some fine broad large tanks here which must be of an ancient age.

* This story is attached to almost all Siva Lingams.

The temple and the worship of the God is in charge of an ascetic *Sanyasi*, belonging to the *Giri* branch of the ten *Mats* of Sankaracharya. We need not say, the *Mahanta* in charge is bound to remain unmarried and lead a strict ascetic life. These *Mahantas* are succeeded by their particular *Chelas* (disciples) selected by them and approved by the *Sanyasis* of the other nine *Mats*. The whole of the income of the temple is intended to be spent in religious and charitable purposes. *

The greatest festivals of this temple are held on the *Sivaratri* day and on the last day of the Bengali year, when thousands of men and women come here to adore and worship the God, but this temple, as we have said, is a temple for cure of diseases. Men and women, living at the furthest corners of India, prayed to the God and fast in his name so that they might be cured of their diseases, and when they are cured, they hasten to the God to offer him his *Puja*. Thus there is hardly a day when hundreds of men and women are not found worshipping at this wonderful temple.

It will be found also that at least a score of men and women,—specially women,—are lying flat in

* We are sorry to say the *Mahantas* of many temples are not what they should be. Neither do they spend the temple money for which they were originally intended by their donors. This can be easily remedied and should be remedied as soon as possible.

front of the temple,¹—in strict fasting,—without taking any food or drink for days together—their mind devotedly concentrated in the great God,—praying with deep faith and devotion to Him to cure her or her son, or husband or any dear and near one. Invariably these devoted men and women get some medicine in their dreams,—and they go away assuaged and full of hopes. If there were nothing in this temple,—if the afflicted ones with incurable diseases were not really cured,—then perhaps this temple would have lost all its glory long and long ago. We do not venture to explain this great mystery of this place ;—many learned disquisitions have been written on it. This much we can say that this temple cures people and has cured millions of men, women and children ; there is no dispute about that. Is there any thing impossible to a man who has been able to invoke into his innermost heart Faith and Devotion to the all-loving God of all Gods,—our Father on high !

Tarakeshwara is the name of the God of this temple and the place has been named after Him. It is situated about 30 miles from Calcutta, the terminus station of the Tarakeshwara Railway Line. We might mention that it is principally and chiefly a Siva Temple,—there is a Sakti,—but she is not at all important.

BAIDYANATHA :—It is also a great Saiva temple. It is situated about 205 miles from Calcutta on the Deoghur Station which stands on a branch line from Baidyanath Junction. There is a group of 22 temples

dedicated to Siva, the oldest and the biggest being the temple of Baidyanatha. It is said to contain one of the twelve oldest Lingums of Siva in India.

Whatever it is, it is certain that this temple is of very early date. The temples are built in quite different style than those of Bengal; their architecture is quite different. These temples being spiral, whereas all Bengal temples are surmounted with domes. The very appearance of one or two of these big temples shows that they were built at least many hundreds of years ago.

The God Baidyanath himself is but an Emblem,—a piece of stone imbedded in the ground. The devotees without the distinction of caste and creed, worship the God by simply pouring over him waters, milk and *Bilwa* leaves and uttering the *Mantra* “*I bow down my head to Siva.*” Every one is allowed to touch the God who is in a small dark room with only one door,—but a lamp burning Ghee is perpetually lighting the place. The other temples are dedicated to other Gods and Goddesses, but they are secondary here.

A story,—ludicrous we must admit,—is told about this Siva. It is said that the great Rakshasha king Ravana,—one of the greatest devotees of Siva,—wanted to place the greatest Lingum of Siva in his own golden city of Lanka. For this purpose Ravana went to Kailasha and took up the Lingum and started homeward. Siva cried, “O Ravana, I am willing to go

with you to Lanka, but on this condition, that if you put me down from your head anywhere on your way,—I shall remain there and no one will be able to move me.” “Very well,” replied Ravana, and started for Lanka with proud strides.

But the God was equal to him. He made the Rakshasha so pressed with Nature’s call that he could not suppress it,—tried how much he might. He was at last obliged to take the great Lingum off his head and placed it on a certain place in a big forest. There the God remained and Ravana could not raise it again. He went away disappointed, and from that day that Lingum became known as the great Baidyanatha. And the water that Rakshasha made became a river, and this is now known as *Siva Ganga*,—regarded as a very holy water. It is at present not a river at all,—but a large tank which the devotees have decorated with masonry steps.

We need not say that the greatest festival day of this temple is the Sivaratri day when millions of men come to pay homage and worship to the God from the remotest corner of India—coming walking hundreds of miles with the holy water of the Ganges on their heads.

The temple is in charge of Pandas,—whose titles are *Ojabs* ;—they are the sole custodians of the Gods and have become immensely rich by the offerings of the devotees. They are not ascetics, and they are all family-men as the *Haldars* of Kalighat.

PURUSHATWAMA :—It is one of the most important shrines in India. At the time of the car-festival more than a million of men gather here from all parts of India. It stands in a district town in Orissa called Puri on the sea. A special work called *Utkal Khanda*, was written in order to glorify this great *Tirtha*. This is the Pouranika story.

It is said that when Srikrishna died by the arrow of a hunter, the Pandavas came to perform his funeral ceremony,—but his body could not be burnt, and the Pandavas fell into great difficulties. At this time an invisible voice said in the sky :—"The body of the God himself cannot be burnt to ashes. Throw the body into the sea and the God will appear in the Kali Age at *Nilachala* in the shape of *Daru Brahma Jagannatha*."

This Wooden Lord of the Universe was discovered by Indradumna, the king of Malava. He was a great devotee and he came to learn through his devotional powers that Jagannatha had appeared on the *Nilachala* Hill in Orissa. He sent out various men to find the place where the God was. One of them named Vidya-pati came to a hunter's place and fell in love with his beautiful daughter. He married the girl and lived in the hunter's house,—but could never meet his father-in-law. On enquiring about it to his wife Lalita, he learnt that the hunter every day went to worship the Jagannatha. One day he caught hold of his father-in-law and pressed him hard to take him to Jagannatha, but the hunter did not agree. But he was pressed

again and again both by his son-in-law^o and daughter and at last he was prevailed upon to take Vidyapati to the Jagannatha on the condition that he would have to go blind-folded. •

But this did not satisfy Vidyapati.—His intelligent wife however said that she would give him some linseed which he must throw as he would proceed.● In time these seeds would germinate and then he would be able to trace the place where was the great God by the help of these linseed plants.

Vidyapati accepted this intelligent advice of his beloved wife and did as he was told to do. He went with his father-in-law into the deepest forest and was blessed by seeing the Great God Jagannatha.

After staying for sometime at the house of his father-in-law he returned to king Indradumna and told him what he had found. The king immediately went to the place as pointed out by Vidyapati with the help of the linseed plants, but he could see no God, He then thought that the hunter must have removed the God somewhere else and he began to chastise the poor man. The hunter in great distress devotedly prayed to the God, when a voice in the sky thus said, "O king, you will not be able to see me now. Build a great temple here and consecrate it by Brahma himself when you will see me." .

King Indradumna at once began to build the temple and the construction charge was given to Vishwa-

karma,—the builder of the Universe. When the temple was finished, king Indradumna dreamt a dream in which he saw that the God himself was standing by his side and saying, “Go to-morrow on the coast of the sea and you will there find on the waves the wooden Myself. Make my Image out of it and place it in the temple.”

The king repaired to the sea next morning and found a big log of wood floating on the waves.

He tried with all his men to drag it on to the shore but failed. It could not be moved. The king was very much grieved and he determined to kill himself by drowning in the sea. When he was going to throw himself into the water,—a voice cried in the sky, “O king, none will be able to take me from the sea except the hunter. Call him at once here.”

The hunter was soon sent for and the king gratified him by many presents. As soon as the hunter touched the wood,—it came to the temple. The king then called together various artisans to make an Image of the God from the log of the wood,—but they could not do any thing,—they could not even make a mark on it by their instruments. The king was again very much grieved when God himself came before him assuming the form of a very old carpenter. Indradumna said, “When all these able carpenters and artisans failed to do any thing, how could you expect to do it,—old as you are? Ask for money,—I shall order it to be given to you.”

The old man replied,—“I have not come to you, O king, for any money. I learnt that all your artisans have failed to build an Image of God from this wood,—therefore I have come to see what I can do.”

The king said, “Very well, try.”

The old carpenter said,—“I shall make the Image in twenty one days and I shall remain within the temple with closed doors. Within these twenty one days none will be allowed to open the doors.”

Indradumna agreed, and the old carpenter went into the room with the log of wood and closed the doors. Day after day passed away and the king grew very impatient. He heard no noise whatsoever within the temple and suspecting that the old man was doing nothing,—he ordered the doors to be broken open. It was done, when the king and all the people saw that, the Image of Jagannatha was in the temple half complete. His hands and feet were not as yet made. Such was the God that was installed in the temple by king Indradumna of Malava.

But we have said that this great temple has a history of its own, Before or after,—whenever it might be, it is certain that this temple was once a great Buddhist temple. We do not say that originally it was a Buddhist temple,—nor do we say that originally it was a Hindu temple ;—no body can say either of this with any certainty,—but we can very safely say that it has passed through the Buddhist period as a Buddhist temple.

During the Mahomedan period it passed through many vicissitudes. When Raja Sovandeva was the ruler of Orissa, one Mussalman warrior named *Lakta Vaha* came to invade his country. Sovandeva with the image of Jagannatha and all his wealth fled to a place called *Gopalli* in Sonapur. Here in the deepest forest he kept buried both the Image and his great wealth.

One hundred forty six years after this incident, king Jajati Keshari drove the Mussalmans from Orissa and reconquered the country. He then with much difficulty brought out the Image of the God,—but found that it had been totally destroyed by age. He then searched the descendants of the Brahman worshippers of the God from a place called *Ratnapur*. He brought them back to Puri and made a new Image from another auspicious piece of wood.

The old temple built by king Indradumna was destroyed—Jajati Keshari built a new temple,—but it appears that this temple does not exist to-day. The present temple was built by king Anangabhimā in 1119. *Sakabda*, as the inscription on the temple indicates. The inscription is to be found inscribed on the wall just behind the image of the great God.

The present image also is not the original one. *Kālahar* the great Mahomedan convert from a Bengali Hindu became the powerful Mahomedan general and overran Orissa with fire and sword. The

custodians of the 'God ran away with' the image and kept it hidden under the water of the Chilka lake at a place called Parkad. But Kalapahar dragged it out of the water and put it into a blazing fire. It was reduced to ashes and a new image was built along with those of Balarama and Subhadra.

We need not describe the great Puri temple, for it has been described by various abler hands.

It is a magnificent temple, but its architecture is certainly not of Bengal or North West schools. The temple was built decidedly in the Madras style. The temple has another south Indian feature, namely the *Deva dashis*. They are some dancing girls,—originally dedicated to the temple by the votaries of the God.

The greatest and the most novel feature of this temple is of course the *Ananda Bazar*—the market of Bliss. Here cooked food are sold to all comers without any distinction of caste and creed. The pilgrims hardly ever cook their food when they come to Jagannatha. They one and all purchase their food from this *Ananda Bazar*. The food that are sold here are supposed to be the part of the *Bhoga* or *Prosad* of the God,—i.e. the cooked food that is daily offered to the God.

Such foods are offered to the Gods four times a day,—namely once in the early morning which is called *Sakal Dhupa*. Then food is again offered

at noon which is called *Dipahāra Dhupa*. Then comes the afternoon food named *Sandadhupa*;—then finally is given the night food which is called the *Bara Sringara*.

The greatest festival of Jagannatha is Rat-Jatra or the car-festival. In the first day of this festival, the three Images of Jagannatha, Balarama and Subhadra are placed on three big wooden cars which are newly built every year. These cars are dragged to a garden house or temple called *Gundicka Griha* or maternal aunt's house. It is said Gundicka Devī was the chief queen of king Indradumna. And she was a great devotee of the God, therefore the God used to come to her house for seven days every year. That custom is still preserved. But many great scholars assert that it was but the Buddhist festival of carrying the tooth of Buddha every year in great procession, adopted by the Hindus in another garb. This tooth carrying ceremony on some sort of cars is still to be found all over the Buddhist countries. It is very difficult to find in the Puranas any clear explanation of the car festival of Jagannatha, or as a matter of fact,—a very clear explanation of the presence of Jagannatha, Balarama and their sister Subhadra.

This combination is rather a very novel feature in the Hindu Pouranika Mythology,—unless it is

something as explained by Mrs Ful Kumary Gupta as quoted in the previous pages. *

GAYA :—We have already given the Pouranika accounts of Gaya. It is also like Puri a cosmopolitan Hindu pilgrimage,—a pilgrimage chiefly intended for worshipping dead parents and ancestors. The most important temple is *Vishnu Pada*,—where two imprints of foot on the stone are worshipped as the Emblem of Vishnu. The custodians of this great Hindu Pilgrimage are a class of Brahmans called *Gayalee* who have become immensely rich,—and no wonder, for millions of Pilgrims from every part of the Hindu world—from the mighty Rajas to the forest beggars,—make offerings to the temples to the best of their ability. These *Gayalees* are not ascetics, but are house-holders like the *Haldars* of Kalighat and the *Pandas* of Baidyanatha.

At one time Gaya was the greatest and the chief Buddhist pilgrimage and this shrine now stands at Buddha Gaya, some seven miles from the Railway station where there are now many Buddhist monks and where a remarkably beautiful Image of Buddha, brought from

* Many valuable works have been written on the great Puri Temple,—our readers can very well learn everything worth knowing of this temple in these works. They can consult Sir William Hunter's *Orissa* as well as *Orissa* by Dr. Rajendra Lal Mitra. Puri is now connected with all parts of India by Railways,—so every one can now easily visit it at a nominal cost.

Japan is located in the Burmese monastery. Gaya is 292 miles from Calcutta and now is connected with railways with all parts of India.

KAMAKHYA :—It is perhaps the most important *Tantrika* shrine in India. It is situated in Assam, —only a few miles from the town of Gauhati which stands on the magnificent river Brahmaputra. Gauhati is now connected with Railway from Calcutta.

It is one of the 52 *Mohapitas*. The female parts of the Great Goddess are supposed to have fallen here. Whatever it is,—*Kamakhya* became the centre of *Tantrikism* and *Saktism* in India from the very earliest times. It was the centre of all *Tantrika* occultism and *Tantrika* mysticism and it was visited by great *Tantrikas* and *Saktas*,—the worshippers of *Sakti*. Its *Tantrika* fame was so great that even to-day there are thousands of people who believe that no one can return from *Kamakhya* who ever goes there. It is said that men were kept at *Kamakhya* as lambs by the women of that place through their *Tantrika* powers. It was probable that many men who went to *Kamakhya* never came back but settled near about the temple attracted by the very beautiful young women of the place. Hundreds of girls called *Kumaris* were attached to this great *Tantrika* temple and some are still found there.

The temple is neither a very big or a magnificent one. It is situated on a hill,—some two thousand feet high, and the temple could be reached by a hilly

road and some flights of steps. The custodians are a certain class of *Tantrika* Brahmans,—all householders,—and descendants of Bengal Brahmans who migrated to this place, perhaps with the *Tantrika* religion along with them. It is certain that the province of Assam was the chief seat of Hindu Tantrikism, and Saktism flourished here in its greatest glory.

The Goddess is mere an Emblem, and she is worshipped with the same ceremonies as in the cases of all other Sakti Goddesses, such as the Kali of Kali ghat. She is worshipped in all grandeur in every new moon night, and other auspicious days sanctioned to the Puja of the great Mother.

It is very hard to trace the history of this temple, —but there is no question that it is of very ancient date. It is mentioned in the *Tantras*,—it is mentioned in some of the *Puranas*,—and undoubtedly this temple was in existence long before the advent of the *Mahomedans* in this part of the country. From the Buddhist records we find that within three hundred years after the death of the Buddha,—Tantrikism became a very prominent part of his great religion. Therefore it must be assumed that Tantrikism began to flourish in India in or about the second or third century before Christian Era. It is quite certain that in the first few centuries of the Christian Era, Tantrikism was very strong in Assam and the probability is that this great *Tantrika* shrine was established at this

period. But the temple might have been rebuilt many times over.

. CHANDRANATH :—It is a great Saiva shrine,—the chief God of worship is the Siva Lingum called Chandranath. The temple is in charge of an ascetic of the *Bharati* class of the ten Mutts of Sankara Swami. He is always succeeded by one of his *chelas* nominated by him and approved by the ascetics of the other Bharati Mutts in India.

The shrine is situated on a hill called Chandranath,—one of the spurs of the range of mountains that lie on the east of India from the north of Assam to the centre of Burma. It is in the district of Chittagong and is now connected with Railways.

The new and novel,—nay extraordinary,—features of this temple are some fire springs,—in which flames of fire are found issuing from the crevices of the hills. These fires are in existent from time immemorial, and there is absolutely no chance that they will ever disappear. The devotees are struck with wonder and awe at this magnificent sight, and fell flat on the ground and worship the great God with all devotion. Perhaps this is the only temple in India where the Vedic God Agni or the Pauranika God Siva is worshipped in his own *Original Emblem*, namely eternal, everlasting fire.

If this temple is not so famous as that of Baidyanatha, still it is considered as one of the chief pilgrim-

ages in India. The place was very inaccessible a few years ago and therefore only the hardiest and the most venturesome pilgrims could visit it,—but now it is connected by Railways and the number of pilgrims are daily increasing.

We need not say,—the worship, Puja and ceremonies in this shrine are almost the same as in any other Saiva temple such as Baidyanatha &c., its greatest festival being Sivaratri.

We need not say, there are many other minor shrines in Bengal such as *Sitakunda* in Monghyr &c.,—but these six must be considered as the chief and the most important. Kalighat and Kamakhya are great Tantrika shrines,—Baidyanath and Tarakeshwara are great Saiva temples,—Jagannatha is the God for all and Gaya is the place where one can worship his dead parents and help them to ascend to heaven.

CHAPTER VIII.

Tirthas in N. W. P.

BENARES :—Unquestionably Benares is the greatest and holiest of the Hindu Pilgrimages in India. It is, and ever was, the centre of all Hindu learning ;—it is resorted to by all the holy sages and the austere ascetics from every part of India. It is the great city of Siva and all his ascetic followers. We have already said that the glory of Kashi has been sung in many Puranas and the Upapuranas.

One Purana writes :—“It is not difficult to achieve Yoga in Kashi,—it is not difficult to achieve Mukti (Emancipation) in Kashi. Therefore all dying men should resort to Kashi.”

Another says :—“Those that are virtuous and pure and live in Kashi lead their own soul and the souls of their ancestors and descendants hundred generations upwards and downwards, to Heaven.”

Another writes :—“If highly worldly and vicious men die in Kashi,—even they are saved.”

The following are the chief holy shrines in Benares.

The temple of Bisheshwara :—This is the temple and the God of Kashi. The temple is decorated

with golden domes,—in fact its upper portion is plated with gold,—therefore it is world-renowned by the name of the great Golden Temple. It was not the original temple of Bisheshwara. It was converted into a Mussalman Musjid by the Emperor Aurangzeeb. A few years after this, a new temple was built.

Near it stands the well-known well,—called *Jnana-bapi*,—the distributor of True Knowledge. It is said that the Lingum of Bisheshwara was kept hidden in this well when Aurangzeeb came.

Annapurna :—This temple stands near the temple of Bisheshwara, and it is a larger temple than that of Bisheshwara. We have written all about Annapurna, therefore we need not dilate upon it here.

Benares is full of temples. We mention below a few of them.

Dhundiraj Ganesha,—this temple is also situated near that of Bisheshwara.

Kala Vairaba :—The eyes of this God are made of silver. He has his dog by his side. He is supposed to be the protector of Benares.

Dandapani :—The Image of this temple is about 5 or 6 feet in height.

Sitala Mandir :—It contains the Images of seven sisters. The chief Goddess is the Goddess of small pox. There are three other Sitala temples in Benares.

Navagraha Temple :—It is the temple for nine planets.

. *Kalkupa* is a well. Bathing in this well means sending one's ancestors to heaven. There is a small hole in the wall round this well. It is so constructed that the rays of the sun falls on the water of the well just at midday.

Manikarnika :—It is the most famous *ghat* in Benares. To bathe here, to die here, to be burnt here mean Eternal Heaven.

Tarakeshwara :—is the Siva whose temple stands just on the Manikarnika ghat.

Dhashashwamedha ghat :—The most celebrated Ghat in Kashi. It is the holiest place. It is said that Brahma himself performed here ten Horse Sacrifices. There are two Siva Lingums on this ghat, called Dashashwamedhashwara and Brahma-shwara.

Bindu Madhava :—This temple also was converted into a Musjid by Aurangzeeb.

Kedarashwara :—It is on the Kedar ghat and situated in the quarters in which the Bengalees chiefly reside.

Tilvandashwara :—It is said this Lingum daily increases in the proportion of a linseed. It is a very big Lingum,—perhaps the biggest in Benares.

Durga bati :—It is a very celebrated temple in Benares. It is a Sakti temple and many goats are daily sacrificed here.

The river sight of Benares is one of the grandest view in the world. Its beautiful ghats are world-renowned. There are hundreds of ghats, amongst them the following might be mentioned. Ashisangum ghat, Tulsi ghat, Gonesh ghat. Sivalya ghat, Dandi ghat, Manmandir ghat, Tripuravairavi ghat, Panchaganga ghat, Durga ghat, Suravi ghat, Trilochan ghat, Varunasangam ghat, Mir ghat, Pisachmochan ghat, Agni-shwara ghat, Sahasrajogini ghat &c. &c.

PRAYAGA :—It is one of the most celebrated and sacred *Tirthas* of the Hindus. Its present name is Allahabad. It is situated some 565 miles from Calcutta on the East Indian Railway.

It is on the confluence of the two of the holiest rivers of India, namely the Ganges and the Jamuna. Here have the two mighty rivers joined together, and becoming one, flow eastwards. It is said that another holy river called the *Saraswati* also here joined with the other two,—but she has now altogether disappeared.

This holy place is visited by all sects of the Hindus and thousands of ascetics of various schools congregate here during the month of *Magha*,—specially at the time of Kumbha Mela which takes places every twelfth year.

The place where the three rivers join together is called Beni ghat. Here were performed thousands of Sacrifices by various kings and sages from the earliest times and therefore the place was named *Prayaga*.

The Mahomedans built a strong fortress on the confluence of the Jamuna and the Ganges, and this fort still exists. Within the fort, there is a banian tree, called *Akhya Bata* which is said to be everlasting. The pilgrims worship the tree and also worship the Siva that is within the fort. But the chief ceremony to be performed here is shaving oneself from head to foot and bathing in the confluence and distributing alms. There are some other minor temples here which the pilgrims do not fail to visit.

BINDUBASHINI :—This is also a celebrated shrine. It is said that Sakti destroyed Sambhu and Nishumbha at this place. The temple stands on a high hill rising almost from the waters of the Ganges. It is one of the Pitasthana. The temple contains an Image of Sakti with eight arms.

AJODHYA :—We need not say that Ajodhya is a pilgrimage of those Hindus that are the worshippers of Rama as an Incarnation of God ; but it is now visited by all classes of the Hindus,—therefore we give a short description of this Hindu *Tirtha*. As a matter of course a Purana called the *Ajodhyamahatma* has been written in glorification of this place. We give the translation of a few *Slokas* from this *Mahatma*.

“The celebrated in the three worlds—Ajodhya is the worshipped of all.”

“Ten thousand ten hundred *Kotis* of Tirthas are situated in Ajodhya.”

“Whether a male or a female, whoever he or she is and whatever sinner he or she may be,—all of his or her sins will be cleansed if he or she only once bathes in *Ajodhya*.”

“He who lives twelve nights in *Ajodhya* with pure and virtuous mind receives the fruits of all Sacrifices and goes to heaven.”

It is said that after the fall of the dynasty of Rama, —the place became a wilderness,—a deep forest full of ruins. A Hindu king named Vikramjit cleared the jungle, restored many of the ruins and built 360 temples of which about 30 still exist.

The chief places of interest here are Ramkot, the birth place of Rama, Sargadara, Ashwamedha Sthana, Mani Parvata, Sugriva Parvata, Hanuman Kot and the various ghats on the bank of the *Sarayu*.

BRINDABANA AND MATHURA :—These two are strictly Vaishnava holy places,—therefore we need not not describe them here.

PUSHKARA :—is a great pilgrimage of the Hindus. It is a big lake some miles off from Jeypur in Rajputana. This place can be reached from Ajmere station. It is visited by all sorts and conditions of men, and at the *Kumbha Mela* which takes place every twelfth year, thousands of ascetics come here to bathe.

CHAPTER IX.

Tirthas in the Punjab.

The most important Tirthas in the Punjab are the Kurukshetra and Haridwar. They are visited by all classes of Hindus who can afford to do it and those who cannot, feel the greatest possible disappointment.

KURUKSHETRA :—is a most ancient Hindu Tirtha. It lies a few miles from Delhi and it can be reached from the Thaneshwar station of the East Indian Railway. According to the Mahabharata, this Tirtha is of very ancient date. It was considered a great Tirtha at the time of Kuru Pandava. It is said that Purushrama performed many Yagmas at this place. However, it must have become a very popular pilgrimage after the great battle.

The present site of Kurukshetra is undefinable. It extends over twelve miles of arid ground,—almost a desert,—but there are various Tirthas in this extensive land ; there are 91 Tirthas within an area of six miles. We mention a few of these Tirthas,—as it is not possible to mention them all. The following are the chief :—Agni Tirtha, Amritakupa, Aruna

Sangama, (the confluence of the river *Aruna* and *Saraswati*), Indra Tirtha, Vagavati, Aishinarha, Kaynjakavana, Konvira Tirtha, Konsiki sangum (the confluence of the rivers *Konsiki* and *Drisadatti*) Taijarh Tirtha, Dadhichi Tirtha, Prithudaka, Panchavati, Matrj Tirtha, Jajati Tirtha, Vasisthapaha Tirtha, Vashathali, Sama Tirtha, Sthanu Tirtha, Sannihati Tirtha, Devipachan Tirtha, Sthanuavat, Chakra Tirtha, Vishunpad Tirtha, Swsthi Tirtha, &c.

In this extensive field there is a very big tank ;—the four sides of this lake-like tank are ornamented with masonry and stone steps. In the centre of this lake, there is a square island ;—there are two causeways to reach it. There is a very holy Tirtha on this island called Chandrakupa. Aurangzeeb built a fortress on this island which still exists.

Bathing and offering *Pindas* to the dead ancestors are the chief ceremonies here.

HARIDWAR :—This is the place where the holy Ganges first reached the plains of India, rushing downwards from the snowy peaks of the Himalayas. Here flows she in two streams. The temples are all situated on the bank of the western streams. The pilgrims bathe here in the Brahmakunda and Kushabhartha ghats and perform the *Sradh* of the dead forefathers.

The most sacred temple is of Sri Sri Sarvanath Deva,—a Siva Lingum. On the south of this temple is that of Vairaba. At a little distance stands the

temple of Mayādevi. The image is that of Sakti with three heads, and four arms. She holds in one hand the Trident and in another the human head. The place is decidedly a Saiva and Sakta pilgrimage.

AMARNATH :—One of the most celebrated and wonderful Hindu shrines is undoubtedly Amarnath. It is situated in Kashmir and very difficult to reach. There are Railway and good roads to Srinagar, the Capital of Kashmir,—and thence the Pilgrims have to walk throughout the difficult mountain paths till they reach this holy place. Yet hundreds of pilgrims every year go there ; nothing could daunt their indomitable faith and devotion.

The wonderful part of the Shrine is its Siva Lingum. It is made of snow,—but this is not all. On the full moon day,—you will find the Lingum in its full and complete form,—but from the next day it begins to melt, and melts away inch by inch per day till on the new moon day,—it completely disappears. Then from the next day again,—it begins to form in snow. Inch by inch it grows and becomes complete on the full moon day and so on from month to month and year to year. It is no wonder that thousands will flock to see and worship this wonderful Lingum.

KEDARNATH :—From Haridwar the pilgrims have to go to Badarikasrama,—a celebrated holy place. Thence they go by the circuitous mountain path about

112 miles to Kedarnath. The way is very inaccessible and difficult. The Lingum here is in the shape of the thumb of a bullock. There are five *Kedaras*—i. e. Siva Lingums here,—namely Kedarnath, Kalpashwara, Tadhgashwara, Ludranath and Jagannatha.

KAILASH :—is more inaccessible than any of the above Tirthas. It lies on the north of the Himalayas and it is always covered with snow. The pilgrims circumambulate this holy of all holy hills and bathe in the beautiful Manasha lake. This place can be reached via Kashmir through the mountain paths. We need not say very few pilgrims can reach this holy Tirtha,—generally ascetics visit this place.

JALLANDARA :—This great Sakti shrine is in the Punjab and can be reached by the Jallandar station of the N. W. Railway. It is one of the fifty two *Pitas*. Here fell the left breast of Sati. The Goddess is called here Tripuramatini, and Siva is called *Visvahana*. The image is *Vishwa mukhi*,—the emblem of the breast is always kept hidden under a piece of cloth,—over it stands the image with a metal face.

JALAMUKHI :—There is another *Pita* in the Punjab. The tongue of the Goddess fell here. She is known by the name of *Ambika* and Siva is called *Unmatya*. This place is reached from the Jallandar station.

The temple is very beautiful with its entire upper part and dome covered with gold plates. Its door is made of silver and most artistically carved. Within the temple, there is a deep hole from which a flame

of fire bursts forth day and night. There are a few other fire springs in this temple. There is no image of the Goddess,—this flame of fire is worshipped as her tongue.

PASHUPATINATH ;—The most sacred shrine in Nepal. It stands on the river Vagmati near Katamundu, the capital city of Nepal. It is one of the famous Saiva temples in India. It can be reached via Sigoli, a railway station on the Tirhut Railway,—distance by road to Katamundu,—then by difficult mountain path to Pashupatinath.

BADRINATH :—Another very celebrated Saiva temple. It is also called *Badarikasrama*. It is reached after crossing the Ganges by the iron bridge of Lakshmanjholā. It is on a high spur of the Himalayas and the place is very cold. The temple is about 48 feet high. Within is an image of Vishnu with four arms. Near by there is a hot spring. Many pilgrims resort here every year from the month of Vaisaka to that of Vādra.

CHAPTER X.

Tirthas in Bombay &c.

Abantika—is a very ancient holy place in India. It was at various times the capital city of various different kingdoms. It was once the Metropolis of the Malava kingdom. It can now be reached by railway, and is 1094 miles from Calcutta. It had various names such as Abanti, Abantika, Vishaka, and Puspakarantini. It was Ujjain of king Vikramaditya. Its modern name is Ujjain, and it is now a holy place of the Hindus as well as of the Buddhists and Jains.

Ujjain stands on the bank of the river Sipra. Here is situated the celebrated Siva Lingum called Mohakala. On the other bank of the river is a place called Vairagarh where there is the temple of Kal Vairaba. Besides these, there are the temples of Mangaleshwar, Sahasra Dhanankashwar, Dattatraya, also those of Chandra Saraswati &c.

AMARKANTAKA :—This is the place from which the river Nurbudda has taken her rise. It is a high hill on which there is a large lake called Punchakunda from which the Nurbudda flows downwards. There

are innumerable temples here. It is said that Siva here killed the Asura, named Tripura.

GODAVARI :—It is one of the holy Hindu rivers. As Bhagiratha brought down the Ganges from the Himalayas,—so did Goutama bring the Godavari down to the plains from the central India Hills,—or according to the Puranas,—he brought down the same holy Ganga from the matted locks of Siva,—one became Bhagirathi and fell into the Bay of Bengal and the other became Godavari and joined the Arabian sea. When Goutama took away the holy Ganges,—Siva thus spoke :—"Ganga taken by you will be known by the name of Goutami Ganga and Godavari. As the Ganges is very holy at the Sagara-Sangama, as the Jamuna at Prayag and Narmada at Amarkantaka, so will Godavari be holy all through her course. I shall always reside on her banks." The Godavari falls into the sea in seven streams,—namely Tilya, Atreyi, Vardwaja, Goutami, Bridhya Goutami, Konsiki, and Vasista. The places where these seven streams have joined the sea are all considered very sacred and holy in the western India. The Godavari is as much venerated as the Ganges in the western and northern India. Its banks are studded with innumerable temples, the most important Tirtha on its bank is at Nasik.

PUNCHAVATI :—This is the place where was in ancient time an extensive forest in which Rama with his devoted brother Lakshman and his beloved wife

Sita passed some time in exile. Here it was where Lakshman cut off the nose of Surpanaka, the sister of Ravana, and here it was from where Ravana forcibly took away the Oudh princess. From that day, this place has come to be considered as a very holy place. It stands on the Nasik station of G. I. P. Railway and is 1284 miles from Calcutta and only a few miles from Bombay. The bank of the Godavari is studded with many beautiful temples and masonry steps. It might be termed the Kashi of western India. Five miles from the Nasik town there is the hut of Rama still to be found.

MUMBA DEVI :—is the great Goddess—the presiding Deity of Bombay.

These island of Elephanta is some three miles from Bombay—and can be reached by boat or steamer.

The great Siva of Bombay is called Mahabhulashwar. His temple is on the Malabar Hill which stands outskirting the western side of the city on the Arabian sea.

PARVATI DEVI :—This is the most celebrated temple of the Marhatta land. It stands on a hill some 5 miles from the city of Poona,—almost on the celebrated field Kirkee,—where the Marhattas were finally defeated by the English. Parvati temple might be called the counterpart of the Kamakhya temple of Bengal. It is a Sakti temple and the Goddess is Durga. The worship and Puja are all naturally

those of Saktism. Like the many other temples,—in this temple also will be found many maidens dedicated to the Goddess. •

PRAVASA :—is one of the most celebrated *Tirthas* of the Hindus. It was a highly holy place even at the time of the Kurus and the Pandavas. The *Mahabharata* has mentioned it in various places and the Aryans of that age did not fail to visit this holy place at least once in their life.

The reason of this place being considered holy by the ancient Aryans is not far to seek. Here at this place, their most holy and sacred river the Saraswati joined with the sea. From that remotest age down to the present day, thousands of Hindu ascetics as well as lay men resort to this place whenever they could afford to do it. In this place the following are the chief sacred places,—namely Agni Tirtha, Padmak Tirtha, Samudra Tirtha, Sômnatha Tirtha and Kapardi Tirtha. We need not perhaps mention that here on the shore of the sea the Yadus were destroyed by their internecine battle,—only Srikrishna was alive. Even to-day a big venerable Banian tree is shown as the very tree on the branch of which Srikrishna was struck with an arrow shot by a hunter and from the fatal wound of which he died.

A great Siva temple was built here,—when and by whom we cannot say. But it is certain that it was built many thousand years ago. This temple became famous in the name of Somnatha. It became the rich-

est temple in India. The wealthy men and powerful potentates showered gifts and endowments on the temple,—it was stocked with gold and gems and every body knew it contained the wealth of many kings over.

The wealth of Somnatha tempted the great Mahomedan conquerors and Mahmud of Gazhni looted it more than once and raised it to the ground. The present temple was built by Maharani Ahalya Bai of Baroda.

Some twenty miles from Provasha stands the ancient Raivataka Hill made so famous by the Mahabharata. It is now known by the name of Girnar. It is the most celebrated Tirtha of the Hindus as well as of the Jains.

DWARKA :—It stands on the western most extremity of the Peninsula of Guzrat. It is now a famous holy place. It is said to be the capital city of the Yadus. But soon after the destruction of the Yadu race, it was engulfed by the sea. The people say that at the ebb tide, the dome of the palace of Srikrishna is still to be seen.

ELORA :—Perhaps Elora is the grandest temple in India. It is made by digging out some entire hills,—nay it can be called one of the wonders of the world. It is only a few miles distant from the town of Doulatabad which is within the Nizam's dominions and is a station of His Highness's Railway.

Elora which was known by the name of Veruca is the celebrated Siva Tirtha called Griswashwara.

No body has been as yet able to say when originally these wonderful caves were built. They must have been built at a very remote date, for they have passed through the hands of the Hindus, the Buddhists and the Jains. The followers of these three great branches of Hinduism have their sacred temples and caves here. It is not possible to do adequate justice to these wonderful temples in these pages ;—we can only mention here a few of them.

At the very entrance of these caves there is the Image of Jagannatha some five feet in height. On its right and left stand the figures of Jaya and Vijaya. In this cave there are two long rooms with beautifully carved pillars and with many beautiful figures of Gods and Goddesses.

Next is the Adinath Guha. It contains the Images of Lakshmi and Narayana and also that of Adinath.

Third is Indra Sava. It is the most beautiful cave temple ever built. Indra sits on his famous elephant Airavata. On a throne sits his queen with a child on her lap.

Fourth is Parusurama Guha. It is beautifully carved and contains many figures.

Next is the *Kailasha*. At the gate sits a big stone bullock. It contains Siva Lingum, the figures of Ganesha, Lakshmi and Saraswati &c.

Sixth is Ramashwara Guha. It contains a Siva Lingum and many other figures.

Seventh is Janabasha Guha. It contains the Images of Brahma, Vishnu, Siva, Varāhadeva, Kumbhakarna and others.

Eighth is the Dasabatara Guha. It contains the figures of ten Incarnations of God as described by the Puranas.

We need not mention that all these figures and Images are made out of the stone of the hill,—they are all dug out. This much we can say that unless they are seen, they cannot be appreciated. They are almost beyond all descriptions.

CHAPTER XI.

Tirthas in Madras.

ARUNACHALA :—is a celebrated Tirtha in the Madras Presidency. It lies near Pondichary and its present name is Tirubannamalaya. The temple stands on a high hill which rises from the sea. In the temple there is an effulgent Image of Siva. Besides this, there are many other temples, containing the Images of Parvati Devi, Subrahma Deva, Chandikashwar &c.

RISHWAMUKA HILL :—It can be reached by the Gantakul Junction of the Southern Marhatta Railway. It stands on the left bank of the Inugavadra river.

Here Rama met the monkey King Sugriva. On the banks of the river and on the hill, there are many temples,—amongst them the following are the chief. The temple of Ramaswami, that of Virupakha, Pampavati &c.

KANCHIPUR :—is the modern Kanchicvarum. It is now connected with the Madras System of Railways. The learned men of the south consider this Tirtha as sacred and holy as Benares of the north. Our Purana places it as one of the seven places that bestow Eman-

cipation. It says,—“Ajodhya, Mathura, Maya, Kashi, Kanchi, Abantika, Puri and Daravati,—these are the seven Tirthas that bestow Emanicipation.”

This holy place is divided into two parts,—one is Siva Kanchi and the other is Vishnu Kanchi; one is the pilgrimage of the followers of Siva and the other of those of Vishnu. Vishnu Kanchi is situated above 4 miles from the Siva Kanchi.

Here in Siva Kanchi there is the Image of Siva called *Ikamranatha*. It is made of clay,—therefore it is not worshipped with water as is the case with other Siva Lingums. In the yard of the temple there is a very ancient mango tree. Its four branches produce four different sorts of mangos,—one is sweet, one is bitter, another is sour and the other astringent. It is said that the tree produced one ripe mango every day which was offered to the God,—but such ripe fruits cannot be had daily now. From this mango tree, the God has been named *Ikamranatha*.

There is another temple near the temple of Siva. It contains an Image of Sakti,—named *Kamashkhi*. In front of this temple is situated the burial ground of Sankaracharya on which stands a stone statue of the great philosopher.

Vishnu Kanchi temple is far superior and richer in architecture than the temples at Siva Kanchi. We need not say, the temple contains the Images of Vishnu.

. Besides these there are many other temples and shrines near about Kanchiverum. A great fair is held every year at this holy place.

KALAHASTI :—It is a station in the South Indian Railway. The place is full of various temples. The biggest and the holiest temple is that of Siva, whose Image is here of square size. The small room in which the image is placed is almost air tight,—but the lamp that hangs over the God is found always rocking to and fro,—though other lamps in the temple do not move at all. No body can explain this wonderful mystery. The Goddess that is near the temple is called *Jnanaprasanna*.

Here is a temple in which there is an Image of Brahma. This is the only temple in the southern India in which God Brahma is found. One lady named Durga became a Saint. She is still worshipped here.

KUMVAKONAM :—It stands on the bank of the river Kaveri in the Madras Presidency. The place contains six celebrated temples,—namely Kumvashwara, Someshwara Swami, Nagashwara Swami, Sarangpani Swami, Chakrapani Swami, and Vama Swami. On every twelfth year, the great Kumbha Mela is held here. The place where the Kaveri has fallen into the sea is also considered a greatly holy place.

CHIDAMBARUM :—It is a station in the South Indian Railway and is situated almost at the southern extremity of India. It is one of the most ancient temples in India. The temple does not contain any Image.

There is a screen hanging at the door. When people come to worship the God, the priests raise the screen and the worshippers place their offerings at the door. No mortal eye can see this invisible God of the temple. There are many other temples and tanks at this place where people bathe and worship.

TIRUPATI :—It is a station on the Gantaikul Railway. The shrine is situated on the top of a high hill which has seven different peaks,—each being considered very sacred and holy. The following seven are great Tirthas,—namely the temples of Srinivasha Raja, Viyat Ganga, Papvinashini, Pandava Tirtha, Tumbir Kona, Kumarvarika, and Gogarva.

DAKHARAM :—It can be reached from the Rajamundry station of the Madras Railway. The Lingum here is of immense size. It has gone up to the roof of the second story and penetrating it rises two feet above it. The priests pour water on the Lingum from the roof.

SRIRANGA PATTUM :—It is situated in Mysore and is considered to be one of the holiest places of the southern India. It stands on an Island in the river Kaveri. It is a Vaisnava temple and contains the Image of Vishnu as lying in the eternal ocean.

SRIRANGUM :—It also stands on an Island in the river Kaveri. The temple is perhaps the biggest in India. It has seven courts,—the temple plated with gold stands in the seventh court. The Image is that of Srirangaji and covered with valuable Jewels.

RAMESHWARUM :—Perhaps the holiest of all holy pilgrimages of southern India. It is situated at the southernmost extremity of India. It can be reached via Ramnad,—the Raja of which is the custodian of the temple.

Five miles from Ramnad is Dapur or Devipattam where it is said the Mahisasura was killed by the great Goddess. From this place Rama built his bridge to Lanka over which he crossed the sea. This bridge was sixty miles in length. There are twenty four *Tirthas* on it, namely, (1) Chakra Tirtha, (2) Vital Varad Tirtha, (3) Papanashan Tirtha, (4) Sitasar Tirtha, (5) Mangal Tirtha, (6) Amrita Bapika Tirtha, (7) Brahmanda Tirtha, (8) Hunumat Kunda Tirtha, (9) Agasta Tirtha, (10) Sriram Tirtha, (11) Sri Lakshan Tirtha, (12) Jata Tirtha, (13) Sri Lakshmi Tirtha, (14) Agni Tirtha, (15) 2nd Chakra Tirtha, (16) Sri Siva Tirtha, (17) Sankha Tirtha, (18) Jamuna Tirtha, (19) Ganga Tirtha, (20) Gaya Tirtha, (21) Koti Tirtha, (22) Sadhyamrita Tirtha, (23) Man Sakya Tirtha and (24) Dhanuskoti Tirtha.

The temple of Rameshwar is very beautiful. Its principal gate is hundred feet in height. It is said that Ram Chandra founded the Siva Lingum here. Its lower portion is entirely covered with gold plates. Ramashwarum is one of the greatest Siva temples in India.

CHAPTER XI.

The great *Muts*.

Besides the chief temples and holy places that we have mentioned in the previous chapters,—some *Muts* or monasteries founded by the different religious reformers and prophets have now become highly sacred places in India. They too are visited by many thousands of men and are considered to bestow eternal Emancipation to all their votaries.

The origin of *Muts* is of very remote date. Its origin can be easily traced to the time of the Upanishads, when the seed of ascetecism was first sown in India. The Upanishads or the Vedanta first preached that this world is false, it is full of miseries,—the aim and object of human life should be to get rid of these miseries and to attain to eternal Peace and Bliss. The people therefore began to give up worldly life and retired into the forest to acquire *Moksha*.

Many of these ascetics attained to great eminence both for their vast learning and immense spirituality. Many hundreds of men gathered round them and became their disciples and followers. The places in the forests where they lived were named *Asramas*

and considered to be very holy places. Many of the celebrated Upanishads were composed in these *Asramas* and they are called *Araṇyakas*. In course of time these *Asramas* became great pilgrimages;—such pilgrimages; and holy places were *Naimisharanya*,—*Baranashi*,—and other places.

But they were not all *Muts*; the word naturally conveying the sense of masonry building. The *Muts* came to be in existence from the time of the great *Buddha*. He it was who first formed the ascetics into a great organisation which he named *Sangha*. Many great *Muts* were built and founded during the time of the *Buddha*,—and many more were established after his death.

When Buddhism disappeared from India,—the *Muts* did not and could not disappear—many of the Buddhist *Muts* were converted into Hindu *Muts* and many Hindu *Muts* were founded. Following the great example of great *Buddha*,—it became almost a fashion for great Hindu preachers and reformers to found at least some *Muts* and thus *Muts* after *Muts* were established in India. Many of them have disappeared, but many still exist in almost all parts of India. Those that exist have become now great Hindu shrines.

The most celebrated of these *Muts* is the *Sringeri Mut* in the *Madras Presidency*. This *Mut* was founded by great *Sankara Swami*.

When the great ascetic in his mission 'tours over the country came to the source of the Tungabhadra river, he stopped and built a temple, which he dedicated to the Goddess of Learning. Under the name of Sarada, that Goddess is to this day the presiding Deity of the temple there. To the temple he attached a *Mut* and placed the most learned of his disciples, Mandana Misra at its head with the name of Sureshwara Acharya, by which name he is still known in the records of that *Mut*.

The *Sringeri Mut* of to-day is the most richly endowed and the most widely honored of the south Indian religious Institution.

This *Sarada*,—the Goddess of learning of the Sringeri Mut, was originally a highly gifted lady,—she was called *Bharati* and she was the wife of Mandana Misra. When Mandana was defeated by Sankara,—he became his disciples and an ascetic and later on he was placed at the head of Sringeri Mut by Sankara. His wife did not leave him,—Bharati came to the Sringeri Mut and passed her life as an ascetic. When she died, she was deified, and to this day, she is worshipped in the Sringeri Mut with all the devotion due to the great Goddess of learning.

The author of '*Life and Times of Sankara*' thus writes:—"The disputation between the two great men (Sankara and Mandana Misra) was perhaps held in the presence of the king of the place. Mandana apparently set out with the vow of becoming a *San-*

nyasi in case of defeat,—not a very improbable supposition in the case of one who had come to regard himself well nigh invincible and who had an irascible temper. According to his accepted doctrines, turning out a *Sannyasi* and giving up the ritualistic religion of the Vedas are the worst sins that one commits in the world.

Bharati naturally came to know of her husband's defeat and its effects on her, and she then adopted the only sensible course that was open to a woman of her learning and character. * She also renounced the world and became, as it were, a nun and was content to accompany her converted husband wherever he went. When later on the Sringeri Mut was established and Mandana was placed at its head as the successor of Sankara, she must have settled down there and passed her days in prayerful devotion and religious contemplation as it befitted a woman of her history and character.

Her noble and resigned life in her latter days and her peaceful end at Sringeri added lustre to her reputation for uncommon learning and accomplishments and formed the ground work of the admiration which is even now observed in a concrete form in

* We do not agree in the assumptions of the author. We shall ask our readers to read our "Sankara, His Life and Teachings." We quote the author only for a brief account of the incident.

the temple that had been so worthily dedicated to her at Sringeri. Indeed, there cannot be much doubt that Sankara's revival of Vedantic Hinduism in India, is largely indebted to this famous and venerable lady, although we cannot now measure accurately the value of her contribution to the cause of progressive Hinduism in her days. To place her on the pedestal of immortal glory, it is for us to know that Sankara considered her to be worthy of worship and reverential commemoration."

Sankara established some other Muts also ;—they are all now holy shrines. When he came to Purushatama at Puri,—he established a Mut here and named it the *Govardhana Mut*. He also founded a Mut at Dwarka and another in Kashmir. Besides these he converted many *Muts* of other sects into his own Vedantika Muts.

How the same Mut and temple was claimed by both the worshippers of Siva and those of Vishnu will be found from the following account of the great *Terupathi Temple* of Madras.

We quote from the *Life and Times of Ramanuja*:—

"Returning from the north, Ramanuja had to pass by way of Terupathi where matters had assumed a serious aspect on a dispute as to the nature of the Deity there. The Saivas claimed the shrine to be that of God Subrahmanaya while the Vaisnavas claimed it as that of Vishnu. The matter had therefore to be settled one way or the other, and they

agreed to leave the decision to the God himself. It was arranged that one evening both parties should assemble and lock up the *Sanctum Sanctorum*, having placed the weapons peculiar to each Deity. The shrine was to be that of Vishnu or Siva according to the one set or the other assumed by the God. It was found next morning that the image had assumed the disc and conch, the characteristics of Vishnu and ever after the shrine appears to have been taken to be that of Vishnu. Having settled this dispute Ramanuja returned to Srirangum."

To give an example how these Muts and temples were created, we shall quote another passages from our author.

He writes:—"It was while here, (the present Melukote) that Ramanuja's stock of *Namam* (the white earth which serves for the Vaisnava caste-marks on the forehead) ran out and Ramanuja was much concerned. He dreamt over night that there was a hill of that material not far from Tondanur, where he made the acquaintance with Bitti Deva. Following the clue he obtained in his dream and through the good offices of Vital Deva. (Bitti Deva), Ramanuja got the spot marked out in his dream, dug up, when there appeared beneath a small shrine. He then got it consecrated as Tirunarainaparum. Thinking of a suitable image for the shrine, he dreamt of the image of Ramapriya which was at Delhi in possession of the daughter of the ruler at

the time. He had to undertake a journey to Northern India again. Having got possession of the image somewhat miraculously, he returned with it. As the princess proved inconsolable without her image, the king sent a party of men to bring back Ramanuja who found shelter in a Panchama Village. It was out of gratitude for this protection that he ordained the admission of the latter into the temple on the car-festival. The consecration of the image and the completion of the temple are placed in 1021 Saka or 1099 A. D."

We need not say there are many minor *Tirthas*,—but perhaps we have said all that is necessary to say about the holy places and the shrines of the Hindus.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Hindu Sects.

We need not describe the thousands of sects that are now found amongst the Hindus, because their differences are based on outward formalities and have no difference in reality. * The religion,—the real Religion,—of every Hindu is the same,—whatever sect he belongs to. Sects are originated owing to the expansion and deterioration and degradation of religion. It is the case with every religion. Christianity is now divided into many denominations. Even Mahomedanism, the most orthodox religion,—has been divided into Shia and Sunni and many other sects. Buddhism came to be divided into sixty two sects,—only a few years after the death of the great preacher. It is no wonder, therefore, that Hinduism, the most ancient of all religions,—should be divided into innumerable sects, good, bad and indifferent.

* Those that have carefully read this humble work will agree with us in what we say.

Hinduism is mainly divided into five chief sects,—namely the worshippers of Siva,—those of Vishnu, those of Surja, those of Ganapati and those of Sakti. And again these sects are each subdivided into many sects. To describe them all will require a big Volume which is not the scope of this humble work. *

The process of sect-making and sect-creating is in progress amongst the Hindus, from the earliest days. Even at the time of the Vedas,—there grew many *Sakhas* or branches which different people followed in different ways. This process was continued almost even to this day. In later days there were men who considered the Vedic Ritualism as the sole refuge of all and the only means of Salvation. They were supported by the Purva Mimansa Philosophy and one of its greatest exponent was the celebrated Kumaril Bhatta,—who helped more than any one else to destroy Buddhism in India. But there were others who thoroughly rejected Vedic Ritualism as useless superstition and followed Vedantism in both spirit and letter; the greatest exponent of Vedantism was Sankara.

The following story narrated as regards Bhatta and Sankara will explain the intensity of feeling amongst the different Hindu sects.

“When Bhatta was satisfied that his work (meaning the destruction of Buddhism) was fairly over, he is

* We refer our readers to Wilson's “Hindu Sects.”

said to have resolved on the extraordinary course of committing himself to flames of which news reached Sankara at Prāyag. Sankara hastened to the spot and found Bhatta with piles of straw and dried sticks thrown about his person, all of which were already aflame. He even then caused himself to be announced to Bhatta and asked for an explanation of his course of conduct. The latter answered that on reviewing his life, he had found two unpardonable sins which he had been driven to commit to further his mission. The one was the destruction of his Guru; * the other was the practical denial of God in his endeavour to prove the absolute revelational character of the Vedas and the sole efficacy of the Vedic rites to save men. The *Smritis* having ordained self-immolation in such cases as the only proper means of purifying oneself, he had resolved on setting the example of obedience, so that the world might not have cause to say that he was a person who could not follow his precepts." Sankara tried to dissuade him from committing suicide,—but it was too late.

We shall quote two other instances from the life of the great philosopher,—which will give some idea of the sects that were in existence at this time.

"In the Mahratta country, there was a class of Brahmans who worshipped Siva under the name of *Mallari*

* Bhatta studied Buddhism under a Buddhist monk who was his Guru,—but afterwards he set such persecution against Buddhism that his Guru died of broken heart.

and religiously honoured and exulted the position of the dog which was the animal that this God loved to ride on. Vedic texts were quoted to support it. Sankara could easily prove that they were hopelessly in the wrong and show them that the dog, being an unclean animal, did not deserve any worship."

"There was likewise the sect of Kapalikas whom Sankara encountered in his tours. The favourite deity of the Kapalikas was Bhairava, the destroyer, who had a peculiar fondness for the heads of learned Brahmans—the more learned and pious the better. Such a head presented to him streaming with warm blood had been conceived to be the most acceptable offering. A section of the Mahratta Brahmans of the name of *Karadis* used to catch stray pilgrims and offered them in sacrifice. One of these foolish men one day approached Sankara and begged for his head as a gift. He used the sophistries of *Adaityavada* to prove that Sankara could not lose any thing by the loss of his head while he himself gained thereby the highest object of his attainment. Sankara agreed and asked him to come and take it when he was in deep Yoga. The Kapalika was just aiming the fatal blow when at the nick of time, the great disciple of Sankara, Padmapada by name, came suddenly there and caught hold of his lifted arm. He knocked him down and killed him on the very spot."

We shall further quote from the biographer of Sankara.

"Conjeevaram seems at that time to have been a stronghold of Saktas whom Sankara is said to have argued out of their abominations. He purified their temples and the prominence which the Goddess Kama-kshi of Karichi and Minakshi of Madura have to this day, would seem to bear out the prevalence at one time of Sakti worship in all these regions and its purification under Sankara's influence. The net result of the tour of the great philosopher was that the abominations of the Saktas, Ganapatyas, Kapalikas and the rest of their tribe received a severe check."

"Sankara left once again for the north. Passing through the Berars, he stopped for sometime at Ujjain. Some kind of Siva worship was prevalent here which needed the shedding of a good deal of blood of sacrificial victims. These men were called *Bhairavas*. When Sankara tried to bring them back to true religion, they grew wild and attempted to kill him,—but as the king of the place became one of his disciples,—the terrible Bhairavas were suppressed."

We conclude by quoting another passage.

"The last controversial victory was at Kamrupa in Assam. Here Sankara triumphed over the *Sakta* commentator Abhinava Gupta. This man felt his defeat so keenly that he resolved to be revenged on his opponent. Accordingly he utilized his knowledge of black magic and by means of it caused Sankara to be afflicted with a very serious form of disease. His followers tried to cure his fearful malady in various

ways,—but their efforts came to nothing. "Sankara retired to Kedarnath and there did he depart his life in his thirty second year of age."

We believe the above will give a fair idea of the Hindu sects that existed and still exist amongst the Hindus,—but we call them mere accretions of our great religion and we firmly believe that as education will spread amongst the masses and ignorance will be driven out from them, these sects will disappear one after another till there will be but one religion—one God and one sect amongst all Hindus. If the History of our religion is carefully studied,—it will be found that amongst real religious and spiritual men of our race,—Saints and Incarnations like Srikrishna, Buddha, Sankara, Chaitanya and many others, there were no differences of sects, ritualism, or differences of opinions,—they were all followers of one God, one religion and one sect,—and their religion was *Sonātana Dharma*,—the Eternal Religion.

VOL. II.

PART III.

The main Features of Hinduism.

CHAPTER I.

Atma and Paramatma.

The four chief beliefs of all Hindus, whether they are the worshippers of Siva, Sakti, Vishnu or any other Gods and Goddesses, are GOD, SOUL, KARMA and REBIRTHS. The Religion of the Hindus stand on these four factors,—if they are removed,—with them tumbles down their religion itself. Whatever might be the sect or cult to which one belongs,—he believes and is bound to believe in the existence of God—in the existence of his Soul—in *Karma* and *Re-births*. He is no Hindu who does not believe in any or all of them. *

* Perhaps we need not say that there are of course many differences of opinions amongst the learned men in the details of these four main features of the Hindu Religion,—but in the base they are all of one opinion. For example, all believe in the existence of God, but some worship him as a *Saguna* God and some

We have given the idea of God that every Hindu maintains in his heart. We have also given the Hindu belief about the Soul and their different philosophical explanations which are known by the name of *Adaityavada*, *Visista Adaityavada*, *Daityavada* &c. We have also said that *Sankhya* and other philosophies in a way brushed aside the consideration of God and made an attempt to raise the soul to the Highest Perfection,—which the Hindus called *Brahma-Nirvana*,—*Unity with God*,—and which the great Buddha called *Nirvana*—*Complete cessation of births*.

As the following conversation between king Malinda and the great Buddhist Nagasena gives a very clear idea of the Soul as believed by all the Hindus whether they call themselves the Sankhyas, the Buddhists, the Adaityavadis or any other sects or cults, we quote it in full.

King Malinda asks the great sage Nagasena, "How art thou known, venerable Sir? What is thy name, Sir?"

again as *Nirguna* God. Some say the individual soul and the Supreme Soul are one and the same, and some again say that they are two distinct entities and so forth. But in the main there is hardly any difference whatsoever.

* We have repeatedly said that Buddhism is but a development of Hinduism. It also stands on the belief of the Soul, Karma and Rebirths.

We give the translation from *Malindaprasna*,—a celebrated Buddhist work.

The sage replied, "I am named Nagasena, O great King, but Nagasena, O great king, is only a name, an appellation, a designation, an epithet,—a mere word. Here there is no *Subject*."

The king said :—"If, O venerable Sir, there is no subject who is it then that provides you with what you need,—clothes, and food, lodging and medicines? Who is it that enjoys all these things? Who walks in virtues? Who expends labour upon himself? Who attains the path and the fruits of nobleness? Who kills! Who steals! Who walks in pleasures! Who deceives! Who drinks! Who commits sins! Thus there is then no good and no evil. There is no doer and no originator of good and evil actions;—good actions bring no reward and bear no fruits. If any one kills thee, O sage, even he would commit no murder." *

Then the king asked the sage, "Are the hair on your head, Nagasena!"

"No, they are not!"

"Are your mouth, teeth, skin, flesh, blood, spine, Nagasena?"

"No, they are not."

"Is thy body, Nagasena."

"No, great king."

"Are thy sensations, Nagasena?"

* We would ask our readers to very carefully read this conversation. Nothing could give a better idea of *Soul*.

"No, they are not."

"Then apart from the corporal form, and sensations, the perceptions, conformations, and consciousness, is there a Nagasena."

"No, great king!"

"Whenever and wherever I look then, I nowhere find a Nagasena. Who is then Nagasena? There is no Nagasena at all."

Then thus spoke the venerable Nagasena:—"Hast thou, O great King, come here on foot or on a chariot?"

"I have come on a chariot, sire."

"If thou hast come on a chariot, then define the chariot. Is the pole the chariot?"

"No, Sir."

"Is the ornamented cover the chariot, the wheels the chariot, the reins the chariot? If you leave all these out, does there remain any thing of the chariot?"

"No, Sire."

"Wherever I look then, O King, I nowhere find the chariot. A mere word is the chariot. And in the same way, in reference to my hair, my skin, and bones, my corporal form, sensations, perceptions, conformations, and consciousness, the word Nagasena is used, but the *Subject* in the strict sense of the word, there is none. As in the case where all the parts of the chariot come together, the word chariot

is used, so also where the five groups of *Skandhas* * are come together, there is a *person*, a *man*, a human *being*." How then all this comes into existence? The answer is from *Ignorance*—*Avidya*,—*Maya* &c,—that comes over great *Purusha* when He joins with *Prakriti*. †

By the mysterious combination of *Prakriti* and *Purusha*, by illusory power of *Maya* which is sometimes called the *Will Power* of the Supreme One,—*Individual Souls* come into existence. This is birth.

These *Souls* never can remain in an *inert* state,—they act,—they perform actions—they go on per-

* These have been variously described by the different Hindu Philosophies. They are the *Twenty four Tatvas* of the *Sankhya* &c.

† This has been previously explained. Some say from this *Ignorance*, *Avidya* or *Maya*, the Great Soul sees himself as an individual finite soul,—some again say that from this *Ignorance*,—distinct individual souls are created. The following is the Buddhist version of the birth of man.

"From **IGNORANCE** comes **CONFORMATION** (*Samskaras*), from **CONFORMATIONS** comes **CONSCIOUSNESS** (*Vinnana*), from **CONSCIOUSNESS** comes **NAME** and **CORPORAL FORM** (*Nama* and *Rupa*); from **NAME** and **CORPORAL FORM** comes the **SIX FIELDS** (five senses and mind);—from **SIX FIELDS** comes **CONTACT** between the senses and their objects; from **CONTACT** comes **SENSATION**, from **SENSATION** come **THIRST** and **DESIRE**; from **THIRST** comes **CLINGING to EXISTENCE** (*Upadana*), from **CLINGING to EXISTENCE** comes **BEING** (*Bhava*); from **BEING** comes **BIRTH** and from **BIRTH** comes **DEATH** and **BIRTH** again.

forming actions as soon as they come into existence,—this may be millions of years, and this may be only yesterday,—but *actions* are always there. From natural propensities,—these *Souls* act as soon as they are born.

Every *action* which is known by the name of *Karma* as a matter of course by the fixed law of Nature produces a *result*,—visible or invisible. That *result* again produces *effects* and so on it goes on till eternity. After the dissolution of the physical body,—which is also but the *result* of the Soul's *Karma*,—the *Fruits* of a soul's actions remain as if in a dormant state which are called *Sanskaras*. From this *Sanskaras*, new births are produced,—or rather these *Sanskaras* draw around them by the law of Nature certain visible or invisible materials and form into a body—and thus come into a new birth. Such births in this way go on to take place again and again, till “after millions of births,—the great Mother Prakriti, after showing the Soul all the wonders of the world, takes it to its original home—the heart of Purusha” or till it can attain to *Brahma Nirvana*,—by self culture,—by self exertion, by Yoga and meditation when it destroys its *Ignorance* &c. and realises its own real Self. *

* We merely make an attempt to put here the Hindu idea of Soul and Re-births in as lucid a manner as possible. These are very difficult subjects and many great works have been written on them.

CHAPTER II.

The Nature of Soul.

Great •Manu said :—“Him from whom this Universe has sprung,—Him by knowing whom persons of cleansed souls go beyond this world, Him who has not been expressed by the Vedic Mantras and words, I will now indicate. † Listen to me as I speak of the Highest of the High. Himself liberated from the several kinds of taste and scent, and sound touch and form, He is incapable of being grasped by the senses, unmanifest, without colour, the ONE and He has created the five kinds of objects for His creatures. ‡

He is neither female, • nor male, nor of the neuter gender. He is neither existent, nor non-existent, nor existent-non-existent. †

* The above is a translation from • the Santi Parvam of the Mahabharata in which Bhishma quotes from the Great Manu. We have already given in brief an idea of the Soul and the Great Soul as understood by the Hindus. The above quotation is perhaps one of the best description of Atma and Paramatma.

† The five kinds of objects are those of taste, scent, touch, sound and form.

‡ Existent are the atoms &c, non-existent is the space, and existent-non-existent is Maya—the Illusion.

From that eternal and undestroying One, first sprang Space, from Space came Wind, from Wind came Light, from Light came water. From Water sprung the Universe. All things that occur in it, the bodies of all earthly things after dissolution, first enter into water,—thence to light or heat, thence to wind and thence to space.

Brahman, the great Soul, is neither hot nor cold, neither wild nor fierce, neither sour nor astringent, neither sweet nor bitter. He is not endowed with sound or scent or form. He transcends all these and every thing and is without dimensions.

It has been said, that which is the cause of the actor, the act, the materials with which the act is done, the place and the time of the act and the inclinations and propensities in respect of happiness and misery is called the Self or the Soul.

That which pervades every thing, which does everything assuming the forms of living creatures, that which exists in the Universe, that which is the cause of all, that which is the Highest of the High and that which is ONE without a Second and does all things is the CAUSE. Everything is the effect.

The mind united with the senses, recollects after a long time the impressions of objects received in the past. When the senses are all suspended in all their functions as in sleep or death, the Supreme Soul in the form of the Understanding, exists in its own true nature. When the Soul, at such a time

in death or in sleep,—does not in the least regard all these objects of the senses in respect of the their simultinity or the reverse in point of time, but must bring them from all directions holding them together, it necessarily happens that he wanders among all things that are incongruous. *

He is therefore the silent witness. Hence the Soul encased in body is something having a distinct and independent existence. There is *Raja*, there is *Tama* and there is *Satwa*. There is again three states of the understanding (*Buddhi*), namely *waking*, *dreaming* and *sound sleep*. The Soul has knowledge of pleasure and pains, which are all contradictory of these states and which partake of the nature of the threefold attributes above mentioned. †

* What is intended to be said here is that when the soul in a dream musters together the occurrences and objects of different time and places, when in fact congruity in respect of both time and space does not apply to it, it must be regarded to have in existence that is distinct and independent of the senses and the body.

† It is very difficult to translate these Sanskrit passages. The object of this verse is to show that the Soul has only knowledge of the pleasures and pains arising in consequence of *Satwa*, *Raja* and *Tama* and in connection with the three states of the understanding due to the same three attributes. The Soul, however, in knowing them, does not enjoy or suffer from them. He is only the silent and inactive Witness of every thing.

The Soul enters the senses like the wind entering the fire in a piece of wood. One cannot behold the form of the Soul by one's eyes, nor can the sense of touch, amongst the senses, apprehend it. The Soul is not again an object of apprehension by the ear. As regards the senses, that particular sense which apprehends it loses upon such apprehension its existence as a sense. The senses cannot themselves apprehend their respective forms by themselves.

The Soul is omniscient. It beholds all things. Being omniscient, it is the soul that beholds the senses. Though never apprehended by the senses, yet no body can say that the soul which dwells in all creatures which is subtile and which has knowledge for its essence, does not exist.

People see the world reflected on the moon's disc in the form of spots. Though seeing, they do not know that it is the world that is so reflected there. Even such is the knowledge of Soul. That knowledge must come of itself. The Soul depends upon the Soul itself.

So also although the Sun's motion cannot be seen, yet persons, by watching its rising and setting, conclude that the Sun has motion. Similarly those that are endued with wisdom and learning behold the Soul by the aid of the lamp of intelligence, though it is at a great distance from them and seek to merge the fivefold elements which are near, into Brahman.

• We cannot do better than quote the following most beautiful passage which is perhaps incomparable in explaining *how Soul could be seen*.

• “We have heard that only a snake can see a snake’s legs. In the same manner, one can see his Soul, incased as it is in subtle form and dwelling with his gross body, only through the help of his own knowledge. People cannot through their senses know the senses. Similarly mere Intelligence at its highest form cannot behold the Soul which is supreme. The moon, on the fifteenth day of the dark fortnight cannot be seen in consequence of its form being hidden. It can not therefore be said that the moon has met with destruction. Such is the case with the Soul within the body.

On the fifteenth day of the dark fortnight, the gross body of the moon becomes invisible. After the same manner the Soul, when freed from the body, cannot be apprehended. As the moon, gaining another point in the firmament begins to shine once more, similarly the Soul, obtaining a new body, begins to manifest itself once more. The birth, growth, and disappearance of the moon can all be apprehended by the eye. These phenomena, however, appertain to the gross form of that luminary. The same are not the attributes of the Soul.

It cannot be distinctly seen how *Rahu* approaches and leaves the moon. After the same manner the Soul cannot be seen how it leaves one body and enters

another. *Rahu* becomes visible only when it exists with the sun or the moon,—similarly the Soul becomes an object visible only when it exists with the body. When separated from the sun or the moon, *Rahu* can no longer be seen. Similarly the Soul, liberated from the body, can no longer be seen. *

* This is the idea of the Soul and the Great Soul of all Hindus—whether they are the worshippers of Siva or Sakti,—Vishnu or Rama or any of the Gods and Goddesses.

CHAPTER III.

Karma and Rebirths.

To a Hindu *Karma* is *Supreme*,—he is mere a plaything of *Karma*,—he is what he is made by the *Karma* of his previous births.

The Geeta says :—"Man does not attain freedom from action by not performing actions. None can remain for a moment without performing some actions. All perform actions impelled by the Laws of Nature. The world is bound in by the Laws of Action."

The great Buddha said :—"It happens, my disciples, that a Bhikshu, endowed with faith, endowed with righteousness, endowed with knowledge, with resignation, with wisdom, communes thus with himself. * "Now then could I, when my body is dissolved in death, obtain rebirth in a powerful[†] princely family !" He

* For the above quotations we refer our readers to the following Buddhist works ;

Devadutta Sutta.

Anguttara Nikaya.

Samyutta Nikaya Vol. I.

Dhamapada 127.

thinks this thought, dwells on this thought, cherishes on this thought. The *Sanskaras* and *Viharas* (internal condition) which he has thus cherished within him and fostered, lead to his rebirth in such an existence."

Another Bhikshu thus communes with himself, "Now then were I but able, by the destruction of the sinful existence, to discover and to behold for myself the sinless state of deliverance in action and knowledge, even in this present life, and find in it my abode ! He will by the destruction of sinful existence discover and behold for himself the sinless state of deliverance in action and in knowledge even in this present life and will find in it his abode. That Bhikshu will never be reborn."

"Whatsoever one does, to a corresponding state he attains. My *Karma* is my possession, my *Karma* is my inheritance, my *Karma* is the womb which bears me. My *Karma* is the race to which I am born. My *Karma* is my refuge."

"What appears to man to be his body is in truth the action of his past state which then assuming a form, realised through his endeavour, has become endowed with a tangible existence."

"Not in the heavens, not in the midst of the sea, not if thou hidest thyself away in the cliffs of the mountains, wilt thou find a place on earth where thou canst escape from the fruits of thy evil actions." *

* We need not say that *Karma* and *Rebirths* are not recognised by the western philosophers and by the western religions.

• The great Rishis have said :-“Whatever acts are accomplished by means of the body, one enjoys the fruits thereof in a state of physical existence. The body is indeed the frame-work to which happiness inheres as also the frame-work to which misery inheres. Whatever acts are accomplished by means of words, their fruits are to be enjoyed in a state in which words can be spoken. Similarly whatever acts are accomplished by the mind, their fruits are enjoyed in a state in which one is not freed from the mind. Like fishes going against the currents, the acts of a past life come to the actor. The embodied creatures experience happiness for his good acts and misery for his evil acts.”

And again :-

“It is seen that a person in consequence of the acts performed by him obtains results good and evil, which dwell together in harmony. As the good and evil fruits born of their own acts dwell together in the

They do not believe the theories of *Karma* and *Rebirths*, But they are the two chief *Beliefs* of Hinduism as well as Buddhism. Whether there is *Karma* and whether there is *Rebirths*,—we are not to discuss it here. They are large subjects and have been elaborately dwelt upon in many learned works. Our readers, if they so please, may study these works and satisfy themselves.

We might also mention that our idea of *Soul* and the *Great Soul* is quite different from that of the West. We need not point out the difference here.

To enter into controversial matter is not the scope of this work.

bodies of creatures which are their refuge, so knowledge dwells in the body." *

The following quotation from the *Shastras* will give the Hindu idea of *Punarjanma*,—transmigration or rebirths.

"As the flames of fire, the current of wind, the rays of the sun and the waters of river go and come repeatedly, even so the bodies of embodied creatures are going and coming repeatedly. As a person by taking up an axe cannot by cutting open a piece of wood find either smoke or fire in it, so men cannot by cutting open the arms and feet and stomach of a person, see the principle of knowledge which of course has nothing in common with the stomach, the arms, the feet. As again one beholds both smoke and fire in wood by rubbing it against another piece, so a person of well directed intelligence and wisdom, by uniting the senses and the soul, may view the Supreme Soul which of course exists in its own nature.

As in the midst of a dream, one beholds one's own body lying on the ground as some thing distinct from one's ownself, even so a person, endued with five senses, the mind and the understanding, beholds after death his own body and then goes from one into ano-

* The analogy consists in this :—good and evil fruits, though incompatible, dwell together ; similarly knowledge (here meaning *Mana* (mind) and *Buddhi* (understanding) though not material, reside in the material body.

ther form. In consequence of the acts of life being endowed with effects, the Soul clothed in body, passes from this body into another unseen by others,

As any thing placed in a blazing fire before a spectator assumes a certain colour in consequence of the light and heat that operates upon it without taking any other colour, or attribute, even so Soul's form is seen to take its colour from the body. In the same manner, man, casting off one body enters another, unseen by all. Casting off his body to the great primal elements, he assumes a form that is similarly made of the same elements. The embodied creature, upon the destruction of the body, enters space, wind, fire, water, and earth in such a way that each particular element of his body with whose nature it is consonant, mixes with it. The senses also which are engaged in various occupations and dependent on them enter these five elements, that call forth their functions.

The ear derives its capacity from space and the sense of scent from the earth. The property of the eye is the consequence of light or fire. Fire or heat has been called the dependant cause of water. The tongue which has for its property taste becomes merged into water. The skin which has touch for its property becomes lost in the wind whose nature it partakes. The fivefold attributes (sound &c.) dwell in the five great primal Elements. Those fivefold objects of senses dwell in the five senses. All these again follow the lead of the mind. The mind follows the lead of the

understanding and the understanding follows the lead of THAT which exists in its true and undefiled nature, i. e. the Supreme Soul.

The doer in 'his new body receives all the good and the bad acts done by him in his past existence. All acts done in his life and the next ones to come follow the mind as the aquatic animals pass along the favourable currents."

The great Buddhist sage Nagasena thus explained *Rebirths* before king Malinda.

"It is not the same being and yet they are not separate beings which relieve one another in the series of existences."

"Give an illustration" said the king.

Nagasena replied :—"If a man were to light a light, O great king, would it not burn through the night !"

"Surely it would."

"Is the flame in the first watch of the night identical with the flame in the midnight watch ?

"No Sire."

"And the flame in the midnight watch, - is it identical with the flame in the last watch of the night !"

"No Sire."

"But how then, O great king, was the light of the first watch of the night another, in the midnight watch another ?"

"It has burned all night long feeding on the same oil,—but the light is not the same."

"So also, O great king, the chain of existence of beings completes itself, the one comes and the other goes. Without beginning, without end, the circle completes itself; therefore it is neither the same being, nor another being, which presents itself last to the consciousness."

Being is the procession regulated by the law of causality,—of continuous beings, at every moment self consuming and anew begetting. What we call a souled being is *One individual* member in the line of this procession,—one flame in this sea of flames."

CHAPTER IV.

Transmigration,

Once upon a time, a disciple of great intelligence and close attention, desirous of obtaining what was for his highest good, touched his preceptor's feet, and standing with joined hands before him said :—
“Whence am I and whence art thou ! Tell me also what is the final cause ! Why also when the material cause in all beings is the same, their origin and destruction happen in such dissimilar ways !”

The preceptor replied : —“That ONE is the Supreme Cause of the Universe. Having reduced every thing into non-existence, He once more in the beginning of the new *Yuga*, creates PRAKRITI. As the various phenomena of the several seasons that come, in the same manner creatures start forth into existence at the beginning of every *Yuga*. ”

When Primordial Matter (Prakriti) produces *Existence* through the action of the Primal Energy

★ As this story, quoted from the *Shastras*, gives a very succinct description of the theory of Transmigration,—we do not make any apology to quote it here in *exten-so*.

(Purusha), the Universe with all its *Potentialities* begins to flow from it. From one lighted lamp, thousands of other lamps are capable of being lighted. In the same manner, Primordial Matter produces thousands of existent beings. In consequence again of its *Infinity*, Primordial Matter (Prakriti) is never exhausted. From the Unmanifest flows the Understanding determined by *Karma* (acts). The Understanding produces Consciousness (Chit—Chaitanya). From Consciousness proceeds Space. From Space proceeds Wind. From the Wind proceeds Heat. From the Heat proceeds Water and from the Water is produced Earth. These eight constitute Primordial Prakriti. *

The Universe rests on them. From these eight have originated the five organs of knowledge, the five organs of actions,—the five objects of the five above mentioned organs and also the Mind,—all these forming sixteen which are the results of the modification of all of them.

The ear, the skin, the two eyes, the tongue, and the nose are the five organs of knowledge. The two legs, the lower duct, the organ of generation, the two arms, and speech are the five organs of actions.

* Therefore we need not say that the space &c., here mentioned are not what we understand by these terms. They are the original Primordial Elements, from the combination of which this visible as well as invisible Universe was created.

Sound, touch, form, taste and smell are the five objects of senses. The mind dwells upon all the senses and their objects. In the perception of taste, the mind it is that becomes tongue and in speech it is the mind that becomes words. Endued with the different senses, it is the mind that becomes all the objects that exist in its apprehension. These sixteen, existing in their respective forms, should be known as Deities.

Taste is the attribute of water, scent is the attribute of earth ; hearing is the attribute of space. Vision is the attribute of fire or light, and touch should be known as the attribute of the wind. This is the case with all creatures at all times. The mind it has been said is the attribute of existence. Existence springs from the Unmanifest (Prakriti) which every intelligent person should know rests in THAT which is the Soul of all existent things. These existences, resting upon the Supreme Divinity which is above Prakriti and which is without any inclination for action, uphold the entire Universe of mobiles and immobiles.

This sacred edifice of nine doors (i.e. body) is endued with all these existence. That which is high above them, viz the soul, dwells within it, pervading it all over. For this reason it is called Purusha.

The Soul is without decay and not subject to death. It has knowledge of what is manifest and what is unmanifest. It is again all pervading, possessed of attributes, subtle, and the refuge of all existences and attributes. As a lamp discovers all objects great and

small, irrespective of its own size, after the same manner the soul dwells in all creatures as the principle of knowledge, regardless of the attributes or accidents of those creatures. Urging the ear to hear what it hears, it is the soul that hears. Similarly employing the eye, it is the soul that sees. This body furnishes the means by which the soul derives knowledge. The bodily organs are not doers, but it is the soul that is the doer of all acts.

There is fire in the wood, but it can never be seen by cutting open a piece of wood. In the same manner, the soul dwells within the body, but it can never be seen by dissecting the body. The fire that dwells in the wood may be seen by employing proper means, namely rubbing the wood with another piece of wood. Similarly the soul that dwells within the body may be seen by proper means,—namely for example by Yoga.

Water must flow in rivers. Rays of light are always attached to the Sun. In the same manner the soul is attached with the body. This connection does not cease because of the constant succession of bodies that the soul has to enter.

* We must explain this. The great preceptor says :—There can be no river without water. A river cannot exist without water. When a river is mentioned, water is implied. The connection between river and water is not an accident but a *necessary incident*. The same may be said of the Soul. In the same manner, the connection between the Soul and the body is a *necessary*

In a dream, the Soul, endued with the fivefold senses, leaves the body and roves over wide areas. In the same manner when death ensues, the soul, with the senses in their subtile forms, passes out of the body for entering another. The soul is bound by its former *Karma* (acts). Bound by its own acts done in one state of existence, it attains to another state. Indeed it is led from one into another body by its own acts (*Karma*) which are all supreme in respect of their consequences. How the owner of a human body, leaving off his body, enters another and then again into another, how indeed the entire range of beings is the result of their respective acts (*Karma*) of past and present lives, I shall presently tell you."

incident and not an *accident*. The soul can not exist without the body (visible or invisible—*Sukma* or *Sthula*). We need not say that here only the general case is intended. A Yogee can separate his Soul from the body and merge it in Brahman.

CHAPTER V.

The Bond of Rebirth.

“Now listen to me carefully when I explain to you the great Bond of Rebirths. All immobile and mobile beings have been said to be of unmanifest birth and unmanifest death. Existing only in the unmanifest soul, the mind is said to possess the attributes of the unmanifest. As a large tree is ensconced within a small blossom of *Aswatha* flower and becomes observable only when it comes out, even so birth takes place from what is unmanifest. A piece of iron, which is inanimate, runs towards a piece of loadstone. Similarly inclinations and propensities due to natural instincts and all else run towards the soul in a new life. *

Even as those propensities and possessions born of Ignorance and Delusion and inanimate in respect of their nature are united with the soul when reborn. In the same manner those other propensities and aspi-

* The Rishi means that as soon as the Soul takes a new form or body, all the propensities and inclinations as dependent on its past acts take possession of it. Avidya or Maya also takes possession of it.

rations of the Soul that have their gaze directed towards Brahman become united with it, coming to it directly from Brahman itself. Neither earth, nor sky, nor heaven, nor things, nor the vital breaths, nor virtue, and vice, nor any thing else existed before the CHIT SOUL. Nor have they any necessary connection with even the CHIT SOUL defiled by Ignorance. *

* Avidya has been translated by the word Ignorance, —but is not exactly Ignorance as we understand it. The meaning of the above passage is —In the beginning there was nothing except the CHIT—SOUL. Existent objects *exist* only because *Ignorance* has defiled the CHIT SOUL. Connection with the Soul is not absolute and necessary. That connection may be destroyed without the Soul using any thing. Before the creation, there was nothing except the JIVA or the SOUL with KNOWLEDGE alone for its indicating attribute. The earth &c. were not. Nor do they enter to *Jiva* with Ignorance and Delusion for its indicating attributes,—i. e. when JIVA is born, JIVA is SOUL. The born Soul may be seen to manifest all these attributes, but is really independent of or separate from them. Their connection with the Soul is neither absolute nor eternal.

Whence then that connection? All *apprehensions* of the Soul with regard to earth &c. are due to Ignorance or Delusion,—*Maya* or *Avidya* flowing directly from Brahman and assailing it thereafter. The apprehension of the Soul that it is a man or an animal,—that it has a body, that it is acting,—are just like that of one's being a king in a dream,—who is not however really a king or one's being a child, —who is not however a child. Being eternal or without beginning, its first existence under the Delusion (*Maya*) is untraceable.

The Soul is eternal. It is indestructible. It lives in every creature. It is the cause of the Mind. It is without attributes. This Universe that we see and perceive is due to Ignorance or Delusion,—*Avidya* or *Maya*. The Soul's apprehensions of forms being due to past Desires. * The Soul, when it becomes engued with those causes, namely the Desires, is led to the state of its being engaged in acts. In consequence of that condition—for those acts again produce *desires* to end in acts anew and so on,—this vast wheel of existence reveloves without beginning and end. The *Unmanifest*, viz the *Understanding* with *Desires*, is the name of that wheel. The *Manifest* i. e. the body with the senses, constitutes its assemblage of spokes. The perceptions and acts form its circumference. Propelled by the quality of *Raja*, the Soul presides over it, witnessing its revolutions. Like oilmen, pressing oil-seeds in their machine, the consequences born of Ignorance, assailing the Universe of creatures which is moistured by *Raja*, press or grind it in that wheel. In that succession of existences, the living creature, sieved by the idea of self in consequence of Desire, engages in acts.

* In consequence of Desires, the Soul manifests itself in some form of existence. In that state it acts. Those acts again lead to desires anew, which in their turn, bring on new forms or states of existence. The circle of existence or life thus goes on, without beginning or without end. This great Bond of Rebirth can be severed by *Yoga* which merges the individual Soul into the Great Soul.

In the union of cause and effect, these acts again become new *causes*. * Effects do not enter into causes. Nor do causes enter into effects. In the production of effects, *Time* is the *Cause*.

The primordial essences (eight in number) and their modifications (sixteen in number) fraught with causes, exist in a state of union, in consequence of their being always presided over by the Soul. Like dust following the wind that moves it, the *creature Soul*, divested of *body*, but endued still with inclinations (*Saṃskaras*) born of passion and darkness and with the principles of causes, constituted by the acts of the life that is over, moves on, following the direction that the Supreme Soul gives it. The Soul however is never touched by these inclinations and propensities. Nor are these touched by the Soul that is superior to them.”

* The cause is *Atmāṇa*. The effect is the body and the senses, or a particular form of existence. When the creature in consequence of this union of Soul and body engages in acts, these become causes for new births.

† This is the theory of Rebirth which every Hindu believes. The *Birth* is born of *Aviḍya* of the *Soul* and *Rebirths* are the effects of causes, i.e. of *Karma*,—the acts which every embodied Soul *must* perform as soon as born. The whole of Hinduism, whether Saivism, Saktism, Vaisnavism or any other tenets, stands on this belief in the existence of the GREAT SOUL,—the Individual Soul,—their *Karmas* and the results of those *Karmas* which are Rebirths.

CHAPTER V

The four chief factors.

As there are four chief BELIEFS of the Hindus,—so there are four chief FACTORS of the Hindu Religion. Every Hindu's aim and object is to attain to these four factors. They are DHARMA, ARTHA, KAMA and MOKSHA.

The great Hindu religion for the natural perversity of the human mind became divided into hundreds of cults and sects ;—they quarrelled over their rites and rituals,—their social customs and religious ordinances,—but whether they worship Siva, Vishnu, Sakti, Ganapati, Surja or any other Gods and Goddesses, they all aim for *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama* and *Moksha*. There is absolutely no difference amongst any of them. All the worshippings and adorings of Gods and Goddesses,—visiting holy places,—singing the name of God,—all the performances of Yagmas, Sacrifices, rites and rituals,—all the Sadhanas,—ascetecism and austerities,—all aim for *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama* and *Moksha*.

Dharma is generally translated by the word Religion,—but Dharma is not fully expressed by this word. It means of course religion and all that signi-

fy by that word. But it chiefly means *Nature*. As the power of burning is the *Nature* of fire, as the moisture is the *Nature* of water, so is *Dharma* to man. It also means *Duties*,—it means '*Vir̥tue* and *Morality*.

In the Geeta Srikrishana said :—

“Even a man of perfect knowledge acts according to his own nature. All beings follow Nature. All senses have their likes and dislikes for respective fixed objects. But none should be under their control, for they are one's great enemies. One's own *Dharma*, even imperfectly performed is superior to the perfectly performed *Dharma* of other's. Death is preferable in performing one's own *Dharma*,—for the *Dharma* of others is dangerous.”

And again :—

“Every man attains to perfection by performing his own Duties. Worshipping Him from Whom are the exertions of beings and by Whom all the universe is pervaded man is seen to attain to perfection with the performance of his own duties. Better is one's own duty, though imperfectly performed, than another's duty well performed. Man incurs no sin by performing actions prescribed by Nature. Man must not abandon actions prescribed by Nature, however bad they might look, for all actions are enveloped in error as fire by smoke.”

Dharma is the means to acquire *Artha*, *Kama*, and *Moksha*. No one can acquire these three unless and until he can earn *Dharma*.

What is *Artha* then? What is *Kama* and what is *Moksha*?

As *Dharma* is the Science of Virtue and Self-culture,—so *Artha* is the Science of Wealth. *Kama* is the Science of Pleasure and Happiness, and *Moksha* is the Science of Emancipation. These four are being considered as the great SCIENCES that constitute HUMAN KNOWLEDGE from the very beginning of the Aryan Religion. They are the sole aim and object of every Hindu's life;—they desire to acquire *Dharma* which only can bestow *Artha*,—wealth and all worldly goods,—and again which only can bestow *Kama*,—pleasure and happiness,—not only in this life but in various lives after death. And again *Dharma* is the only and sole means by which *Moksha*,—Eternal Emancipation from the Bonds of Rebirths and Union with Brahman can be achieved.

The highly virtuous king Yudhisthira thus asked his great grandsire Bishma.—

“O Sire, the Vedas discourse on *Dharma*, *Artha* and *Kama*. Tell me, O grandfather, the attainments of which amongst these three is regarded as superior? *

Bishma replied :—“I shall in this connection recite to you the ancient narrative of the benefit that *Kanda-*

* We quote the above from Section CCLXXI. Santi Parva, Mahabharata.

dhara in days of old had conferred upon one who was devoted to him.

Once upon a time a Brahman destitute of wealth sought to acquire virtue, induced by the desire of acquiring fruits from his actions. He continuously set his heart upon wealth for using it in the celebration of Sacrifices. For achieving his purpose he set himself to the practice of the austere penances. Resolved to accomplish his purpose, he began to worship the Deities with great devotion. But he failed to obtain wealth by such worship of the Deities.

Therefore he began to reflect, saying unto himself,—“What is that God, hitherto unadored by men, who may be favourably disposed towards me without delay.” While reflecting in this strain with a cool mind, he beheld stationed before him that holder of all Gods,—namely the cloud called *Kundadhara*. As soon as he beheld that mighty-armed God,—the Brahman’s feeling of devotion was excited, and he said unto himself—“This one will surely bestow prosperity upon me.” He lives in close proximity of the Gods. He has not as yet been worshipped and adored by men. He will surely give me abundant wealth without any delay.”

The Brahman then worshipped that cloud-God with perfumes, flowers, and with various kinds of offerings. Thus worshipped, the cloud became very

• We make an attempt to keep as much of the spirit of the original as it is possible to be given in a translation.

soon pleased with his worshipper and thus spoke to him. "The wise have ordained expiation for one guilty of Brahmanicide, or of drinking spirituous liquor, or of stealing, or of neglecting all meritorious vows. There is no expiation, however, for one that is ungrateful. Expectation has a child named Inequity. Wrath again is regarded to be a child of Envy. Cupidity is the child of Deceit. Ingratitude however is barren and has no offspring."

After this, that Brahman, stretched on a bed of *Kusa* grass and penetrated with the energy of Kundadhara, beheld all living beings in a dream. In consequence of passion, penances and devotion, that Brahman of cleansed soul, and standing aloof from all carnal enjoyments, beheld in the night that effect of his devotion to Kundadhara.

He saw the high-souled Manibhadra of great effulgence stationed in the midst of the Gods, employed in giving his orders. There the Gods seemed to be engaged in bestowing kingdom and riches upon men, in consequence of their good deeds and in taking them away when men fell off from goodness. Then Kundadhara of great effulgence bending himself low, prostrated himself on the ground before the Gods. At the command of the Gods, the high-souled Manibhadra addressed the prostrate Kundadhara and thus spoke :—
 "What does Kundadhara want?" Thereupon Kundadhara replied :—"If the Gods are pleased with me, then that Brahman reverences me greatly, I pray for

some favour being 'shown to him. Something that may bring him happiness."

Having heard this, Manibhadra, 'commanded by Gods, thus spoke to the highly intelligent Kundadhara :—"Rise, Rise, O Kundadhara, your prayer is granted. If this Brahman desires to possess wealth, let wealth be given to him. At the command of the Gods, I shall give him untold wealth."

The greatly intelligent Kundadhara thus replied :—"I do not, O giver of wealth, beg for wealth on behalf of this Brahmana. I desire the bestowal of another favour upon him. I do not solicit for this devotee of mine mountains of pearls and gems or even the whole earth with all her riches. I desire, however, that he should be virtuous. Let his heart find pleasure in virtue. Let virtue be the foremost of all objects with him. Even this is the favour that meets with my approval."

Manibhadra said :—"The fruits of virtue are always sovereignty and happiness of various kinds. Let this Brahman enjoy these fruits,—always freed from physical pain of all kinds."

Kundadhara, however, repeatedly solicited virtue alone for that Brahman. The Gods were highly pleased with it. Then Manibhadra said :—"The Gods are all pleased with you as also with this Brahman. This man shall become a virtuous-souled person. He shall devote his mind to virtue."

The Brahman at once felt a distaste for the world;—he retired into the forest and commenced to practise severest austerities. Devoted to virtue and engaged in the practice of severest penances, after a long time, he acquired spiritual vision. He then reflected, “If being gratified with any body, I give him now wealth, my speech would never be untrue.” He practised on and won higher success. He then reflected, “If gratified with any person, I give him now sovereignty, he will immediately become a king,—for my words would never be untrue.” Thus only virtue can bestow on man true wealth and true pleasure and happiness.”

Judhisthira thus asked his venerable, vastly learned grandfather. “I wish, O Sire, to hear the settled conclusions on the subject of virtue, wealth and pleasure. Depending upon which of these three, does the course of life proceed? What are the respective roots of *Dharma*, *Artha* and *Kama*? What are again the result of all those three? They are sometimes seen to mingle with one another and sometimes to exist separately and independently of one another.”

Bhisma replied :—“When man in this world endeavours with good heart to achieve wealth, with the aid of virtue, then those three, namely Virtue, Wealth and Pleasure may be seen to co-exist in a state of union in respect of Time, Cause and Action. Wealth has its root in Virtue, and Pleasure is said to be the fruit of Wealth. All the three again have their root in WILL. Will is concerned with objects. All objects

again in their entirety exist for gratifying the desire of enjoyment. Upon these then does the aggregate of the three depend.

Entire abstraction from all objects is *Moksha* (Emancipation). It is said that Virtue (Dharma) is sought for the protection of the body, and wealth is for the acquisition of virtue. Pleasure is only the gratification of the senses. All the three have therefore the quality of *Raja*. Virtue, Wealth and Pleasure, when sought for the sake of heaven and such other rewards are said to be remote. When sought however for the Knowledge of Self, they are said to be proximate. One should seek them when they are of such a character. - One should not cast them off even mentally.

If Virtue, Wealth and Pleasure are to be abandoned, one should abandon them when one has freed one's Self by ascetic penances. The aim of the Triple aggregate i. e. Dharma, Artha and Kama, is towards Moksha—Emancipation.

One's acts undertaken and completed with even the aid of intelligence may or may not lead to the expected results. Virtue is not always the root of

* The above passage means that one should seek *virtue* only for compassing purity of Soul,—*Wealth* in order that one may spend it in acts undertaken without desire of fruits and *Pleasure* for only supporting the body.

Wealth, for other things than Virtue lead to Wealth. * There is again contrary opinion to this. Some say that wealth is earned through chance or birth or like causes. In some instances, wealth acquired has been productive of evil. Other thing again than wealth such as fasts, vows, worships and adorations have led to the acquisition of Virtue. Therefore a man whose understanding has been debased by ignorance never succeeds in acquiring the highest aim of Virtue and Wealth,—that aim is always Moksha—Emancipation.

Virtue's dross consists in the desire of reward. The dross of wealth consists in hoarding it and when purged of these impurities,—they are productive of great results.

And again that man who, abandoning Virtue and Wealth, pursues only Pleasure, reaps as the consequence of such conduct the destruction of his intelligence. The destruction of intelligence is followed by heedlessness that is at once destructive of both virtue and wealth. From such heedlessness proceed dire atheism and systematic wickedness of conduct. Therefore Virtue should be the root of both Wealth and Pleasure, and then the aggregate of the three will bestow Eternal, Everlasting Moksha—which is BLISS.

* Such as trade, commerce, agriculture, service &c.

CHAPTER VII.

Dharma.

Dharma, thus being the chief factor of a Hindu's life,—nay of every man and woman in the world,—it should be acquired with every effort. What is then this *Dharma* ?

It can be briefly explained as the acquirement of *Jnana*—true knowledge. Therefore the *Acquirement of Jnana* is the *Acquirement of Dharma*. And what is the *Jnana* ? It is *Self-realisation* ;—it is the *True Knowledge of Brahman*—the Supreme One. It is *Self-culture* ---Physical—mental and spiritual,—by which alone this great *Jnana* can be acquired.

In the Geeta, Srikrishna said :—* There are two kinds of beings in this world, namely *God-like* and *Demoniac*. Let me first describe the *God-like*.

Fearlessness, purity of heart, perseverance, Yoga of Knowledge, Gifts, Self-restraint,—Sacrifices, study of self, meditation, uprightness, non-doing of injury, truth, freedom from anger; abandonment of the desire

* See Geeta, Chap. XVI.

for the fruits of actions, peace, freedom from fault-finding, compassion for all, absence of covetousness, gentleness; modesty, absence of restlessness, vigour, forgiveness, firmness, cleanliness, absence of quarrel-someness, freedom from vanity,—all these belong to *God-like* man.

Now hear about the *Demoniac* man. The *Demoniac* men know not what is *Pravritti* and what is *Nivritti*. Neither purity nor good conduct nor truth exists in them. They say that this Universe is false. It has no guiding principle nor has it a God. It has been produced by the union of one another,—the result of lust. These men of lost self and little intelligence and of fearful deeds, believing and depending on this and becoming the enemies of the world are born for the destruction of the Universe. Being embued with hypocrisy, conceit and folly and cherishing insatiable desires, they believe in false things and perform all sinful acts. Cherishing boundless thoughts,—thoughts which are limited by death only, and considering the employment of their desires as the highest aim of life, being bound in hundred nooses of hope and addicted to lust and wrath, they eagerly desire to possess unfairly the hoards

It is very difficult to translate these two words. In brief *Pravritti* means mental actions and *Nivritti* is suspension of mental actions. Therefore *Nivritti* is the means for mental and spiritual self-culture which is the only means to acquire *True Knowledge*.

of wealth, so that with them they can satisfy their desires. "This is obtained to-day by me," "I possess this wealth," "All this wealth will be mine in addition to what I possess," "This enemy has been killed by me," "I shall kill other enemies also," "I am the Lord," "I am the enjoyer," "I am successful," "I am powerful and happy," "I am wealthy," "I am nobly born," "Who is there in the world as I am," "I shall perform Sacrifices," "I shall make gifts," "I shall be merry."

Thus say all *Demoniac* men deluded as they are by ignorance. Tossed about by innumerable thoughts,—enveloped by delusion and attached to the enjoyments of Desires, these men gradually sink into the deepest hell.

Dharma is the only means by which a man can get rid of their *Demoniac* Nature and become *God-like* which is the only and true means for the acquirement of *Artha*, *Kama* and *Moksha*."

How then this great *Dharma* is to be acquired? Great Rishis Patanjali in his world-renowned *Yoga Sutras*,—since then also by many other great Rishis,—has explained this only by two words,—namely *Jama* and *Niyama*. He pointed out that first *Jama* and then *Niyama* should be acquired, if one at all desires to raise himself to a higher plane of mental and spiritual culture which is the way to *Moksha*,—the Eternal Beatitude.

Jama are (1) *Ahimsa*—freedom from any wish to injure others,—both human beings and beasts, animals, insects,—every living thing ; (2) *Satya*—strict truth in reference to both words and thoughts ; (3) *Asthiya*—freedom from appropriation of other's property in thought, word and deed ; (4) *Brahmacharya*—strict renunciation of all indulgence of pleasures and (5) *Apargraha*—non-receiving any thing from any body.

Next is *Niyama*. They comprise (1) *Sascha*—purification of body and mind, (2) *Santosh*—cheerfulness under all circumstances,—whether in weal or in woe ; (3) *Tapasya*—religious austerities ; (4) *Swadhyaya*—the study of the Scriptures and (5) *Ishwarapuja*—the worshipping of God.

Niyama is Self-control—Self-restraint. It is conquering one's own Self. Great Bhisma said :—* “The ancient who had their minds directed to the *Scriptures*, spoke highly of the duty of self-control. One, who is not self-controlled, never enjoys success in religious rites. Religious rites, penances, truth, all these depend upon self-control.

Self-control increases one's energy. Self-control is said to be sacred. The man of self-control becomes sinless and fearless and acquires great results.

One who is self-controlled sleeps happily and wakes up happily. He lives happily in the world and his mind always remains cheerful.

* See Mahabharata, Santi Parva, chap. CC XX.

Every sort of excitement is quietly controlled by self-control. One, who is not self-controlled, fails in a similar endeavour. The self-controlled man sees his numberless enemiess,—namely lust, desire, anger, as if they dwell in a separate body.

Like tigers and other fearful animals, persons shorn of self-control always strike all creatures with fear, for controlling these men, the self created Brahman created kings.

I shall now describe the characteristic marks of those persons who value self-control highly. They are nobility, calmness of nature, contentment, faith, forgiveness, invariable simplicity, the absence of talkativeness, humility, reverence for elders, benevolence, mercy for all creatures, frankness, absention from talks upon king, and men in authority,—nay about every body and all bodies,—absention from all false and useless topics of conversation ;—absention from applause or censure of others.

Shorn of vindictivness and all sorts of grief and happiness and unaffected by praise or censure, such a man is always well behaved. He has good manners, is pure of Soul, has fortitude, and is complete master of all his passions and senses.

Gaining honours in this world, such a man in after-life goes to heaven. Tranquil like a calm ocean, wisdom fills his soul and he is ever cheerful. That man who never rejoices even at large gain and never

feels sorrow when overtaken by misfortune is said to be self-controlled."

Thus it is found that Dharma is self-control,—controlling of all physical senses and mental desires,—mastering over one's physical senses and mind-faculties ; in brief *Dharma* is conquering one's own self in every way. Unless this can be done, none can hope to attain to happiness and freedom from misery in this life and in the life here-after. If *MOKSHA* is BEATITUDE, it cannot be acquired so long one cannot succeed in conquering oneself. Unless he becomes a *Self-controlled* man—unless he becomes a *GOD-like* man, there is no other way to Salvation.

How can one acquire *Dharma*—the natural food for all human mind and human-Soul ? This natural food only can keep the Soul alive,—it can keep it healthy and happy or else it meets with eternal misery and death which has no ending.

This *Dharma* can be acquired by self-culture,—physical, mental and spiritual ; and all the religious differences of the world have come from this "Self-culture. Men of the world have divided themselves into various camps in respect of this matter, and thus different religions have been promulgated,—but *Dharma* being the *natural food* of the *Human Soul*, cannot be two or more,—cannot be more than ONE. There is but ONE GOD on high and there is but ONE DHARMA below on earth.

We have already mentioned some of the ways that have been promulgated by the various religious preachers and great Rishis of India,—they are *Jnana Yoga*, *Karma Yoga*, *Bhakti Yoga* and so forth. But all agree in saying, “Practise and you will succeed.” From the simple worship of an Image to the austere practice of the Samadhi—all are but different steps for *self culture* for the acquirement of *Dharma*, the fruit of which is *Moksha*.

In the Geeta Srikrishna said. “If you cannot *concentrate* your heart and mind upon Me (which is the *Samadhi* of Yoga), then try to realise Me by *Abhyasa Yoga*.”

Abhyasa Yoga is the *Yoga* of practice,—practice of self-control,—controlling of the physical senses and mental faculties,—it is *Nivritti*.

“If you are unable to perform the *Abhyasa Yoga*, then make yourself completely an instrument for My works,—and thus working for Me, you will acquire *Siddhi* which is *MOKSHA*.”

CHAPTER VIII.

Moksha.

What is Moksha? It means Final Emancipation,—Emancipation from the Bonds of Rebirths. It is called BRAHMA-NIRVANA.

In the Geeta, Srikrishna thus explains it :—“When a man abandons all his mental desires and becomes pleased in his Self, he is called a man of devotion. * He who is not moved in misery, who has no cravings for pleasures and who is free from attachments, anger and fear, is called a man of devotion. He who neither feels exultation nor aversion on receiving either the good or the bad,—and who withdraws all his sense from all the wordly objects of senses as a tortoise withdraws its limbs, is called a man of devotion. †

* The original word is *Sthitha Praina*,—literally a man whose understanding is firm in God.

† Srikrishna adds :—“An abstinent man (say a stern ascetic) may withdraw himself from all worldly objects, but he cannot abandon his mental desires. They fly only from him who has *seen* the Supreme ; for then there remains nothing further to be *desired* by him. The madly boisterous senses forcibly steal the mind of even that wise man who tries to attain Final Emancipation.

Pondering over worldly matters breeds attachments for them. From their attachment, Desire is produced. From Desire, anger is begotten. From anger is produced the want of discrimination which is called Delusion. From this Delusion is produced confusion of memory. From the confusion of memory, Loss of reason and understanding, and from the Loss of reason and understanding final destruction.

The man who has controlled his senses and is free from attachment and aversion, though he moves amongst the objects of senses, attains to *Prasada* (Eternal peace). * Such Peace being attained, all miseries are destroyed. The understanding of the man who has attained to Peace, becomes firm in God. †

An undevotional man has no *understanding firm in God*. He who has no such contemplation has no Peace. Where is happiness for him who has no Peace? As the wind destroys a boat in the sea, so is the understanding of that man destroyed whose mind follows the roving senses. Therefore he whose senses are brought under control from all the objects of senses is a man of devotion,—a man whose understanding is firm in God. When it is night to all creatures, the self-controlled

* Peace does not exactly express the sense of *Prasada*. It means that state of mind of a man who has become pleased in his self by his own self i.e. who has no cravings whatsoever; a man without any *Desire*.

† The word is *Samadhistha*;—a man who has entered into the Samadhi state.

man is awake. When all creatures are awake,—a real *Muni*,—a self-controlled man of devotion,—sees not around him.

As the various waters enter the ocean, but do not make any decrease or increase in it, so he in whom all objects of desire enter, but cannot make any impressions, attains to Peace; but not he who desires to have objects of senses. The man, who moves about, abandoning all desires and being unattached to any thing and free from all attachments and Egoism, attains to Peace. This is Living in God. Attaining this state, none remains in delusion of this world. Remaining in this at the time of death one attains to Brahma-Nirvana."

Brahma-Nirvana is the INDESCRIBABLE STATE in which a man becomes or lives with the Supreme Brahman. The *Patanjala Yoga Sutra* says, "When the attributes—*Satwa*, *Raja* and *Tama*, do not come to any use of the Purusha—the Soul,—when they are gradually destroyed,—that State is called *Kaibalya*."

* Brahma-Nirvana means *merging in Brahman*. We have given in the previous pages some idea of *Moksha* as understood by the Hindus,—therefore we need not dilate upon it more here. It is in brief the *Union of the Individual Soul with the Supreme Soul*,—the *merging of Jivalma in Paramatma*. We shall therefore give some idea of the Buddhist Nirvana. Our readers will find there is no very great difference between the Hindu Brahma-Nirvana and the Buddhist-Nirvana. The Hindus say that it is possible to bring into *Nirvana*—extinction—the Soul of a man by uniting with and merging it in the Supreme Soul—Brahman

The great Buddha said :—"Difficult will it be for men to grasp the *Law of Causality*,—the chain of causes and effects.

And this also will be very hard for them to grasp, — the coming of all conformations to an end,—the freeing from every thing earthly,—the extinction of Desire,—the cessation of longing—which is the End,—the Nirvana. †

He whose senses have become tranquil like a horse well-broken by the driver,—who is free from pride and the lust of the flesh and the lust of existence and defilement of ignorance—him even the Gods envy. Such a one whose conduct is right remains like the broad earth unvexed, like the pillar of the city gate unmoved, like a pellucid lake unruffled. For such there are no more births. Tranquil is the mind,—tranquil are the words and deeds of him who is thus tranquillised and made free by Wisdom.

The disciple who has put off lust and desire, rich in wisdom, has here on earth attained the deliverance from Death—the Rest,—the Nirvana,—the Eternal State.

He, who has escaped from the trackless hard mazes of the *Sansara* (world), who has crossed over and

The Buddhists say that it is possible to bring into extinction the human Soul completely—a state which is indescribable. It comes to this that in one a man becomes the Supreme Man and in the other he becomes the Supreme Soul :—both states are indescribable.

• This Law of Causality produces Rebirths.

* See *Mūla Dharmachara Parivartana Sutra*.

reached the shore, self-absorbed, without stumbling and without doubt, who has delivered himself from the Earthly Bond, attains Nirvana."

The great sage Nagasena said,—“Nirvana *is*. It is a *perception* of the mind. The pure, delightful Nirvana free from *Avidya* (Ignorance) and *Trishna* (Desires) is *perceived*.”

MOKSHIA is the *Summum Bonum* of Hinduism,—nay it is its all in all—the final end of all humanity. And it can be acquired only by SELF-CULTURE and SELF-Realisation,—by KNOWLEDGE of HIM who is Absolute, Infinite and Supreme.

This is the aim and object of Saivism and Saktism,—nay of all cults and sects in India—nay of all Humanity,—all men and women all over the world,—whether he is a Christian, Mahomedan, Israelite, Buddhist or belonging to any other known religion. But if seriously considered and if orthodoxy, sectarianism, fanaticism and narrowness of mind is avoided,—it will be found that there is absolutely no difference in the main features of all these hundreds of religions. Whatever the ways they adopt,—they all aim to reach the one and the same goal which is the Eternal Beatitude. And the way is SELF-CULTURE and SELF-REALIZATION,—nothing else is religion. All that bring these two is *Dharma*,—all others are degenerating and injurious. All religions preach it and aim it, and the fools only quarrel over trivialities.

